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4827 Gates of Liberty
(Congress Comm. Volume)
Pub. by
Indian National Congress,
New Delhi. 1947

PREFACE

'To the Gates of Liberty' was originally planned as the Congress-Jubilee Commemoration Volume. The Diamond Jubilee of the Indian National Congress, however, petered out into a mounting crisis of events in 1946-47. It merged into the most momementous epoch of centuries of Indian history in atleast partial fulfilment of the Congress struggle. The plan had to undergo changes and the publication had to come out as a Souvenir of this great epoch. It had to be delayed to keep pace with the fast moving drama of political developments and had to bear the stress and strain of those events. All preliminary arrangements at Lahore, where the book was being built up and was to be published became riot casualty and refuge for them had to be sought elsewhere. These circumstances of our common national experience account for some of the shortcomings.

Also the Committee of eminent leaders who were to sponsor, build up and edit this publication were mostly caught up in such hectic preoccupation all this time that they could not give attention to this work as expected. They had no longer the leisure of a cell in jail to undertake writings that had earlier enriched our literature. Even Dr. Rajendra Prasad, whose was the main inspiration behind this venture had such a strenuous portfolio in warding off hunger and famine and in the building up of the structure of our freedom in the Constituent Assembly, that he could do very little. Thus inspite of valuable guidance and cooperation from several of the Committee and others, the responsibility for the several defects and shortcomings in the editing and publishing of the book is totally of the undersigned.

The book had to be a collection of old and new writings according to plan. Mainly it was an attempt to portray the Congress movement of our times—the Gandhian era. There was to be a shorter account of earlier phases and chronology and a background in remoter history of ancient, middle and modern developments of which the Congress is a part. These developments merge into the dawn of the future on whose threshold we stand today. The national struggle for rebirth is a continuous historical process. Gandhiji is only a product of our heritage. The partial fulfilment in our political freedom is an important stage in our march. We are at the gates of liberty and ready to move forward into it. There is no resting in this eternal march: 'Hence O traveller, march along, march along'.

To try to deal with such a vast subject in one short volume is like catching the flood of the Ganges in a pot, as Hindus are prone to do. We could only pick up what we thought were salient features, some aspects of great movements ideas and trends, personalities and events that have moved one fifth of the human race. The congress has been only a mirror, an epitome of this vast humanity, in even a vaster dynamic setting of the world beyond India's shores. The presentation like this has to be therefore, most inadequate even at its best. It might serve to whet the readers thirst for wider study.

We have chosen to reproduce extensively from various masterly books to fill up our picture. Nehru's *The Discovery of India*, for instance which is a book with similar scope, is like a treasure chest in which we have dipped often. We have used and quoted profusely from Palme Dutt's *India Today* for dealing with the dark period of domination and exploitation against which the Congress mainly fought. It was futile to look for a new, better, uptodate analytical survey. We have reproduced from other acknowledged sources and taken help from many older books for compilation of facts.

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This, however, does not mean that valuable new contributions do not constitute the main features of this book. The series of articles from Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramyya, for instance, by themselves would form a new book of the highest value. There are some first hand accounts by their intimate associates of features in the life and work of Gandhiji, Lokmanya, and Sardar Vallbhbhai. Dr. Radha Krishnan's study of Gandhiji's leadership against the vast sweep of human history, Dr. Radha Kumad's articles on the age long unity and economic pattern of India, Sri Palme Dutts exposition of India's position in world politics, Dr. Kumarappa's picture of economic disruption and rebuilding in India and several other writings are of the highest standrad of the eminent writers and shall constitute a permanent contribution to our literature. Messages from President Chiang Kai-Shek, Pearl Buck, and Lin Yutang, great world citizens and constant friends of our country's cause form another valuable part of the volume.

But besides these brilliant parts, the book had to have other parts of the nature of compilation of chronological facts. The volume, under the circumstance, has come out to be like a piece of mosaic, in which gems of thought and exposition, old and new, had to be fitted in with a mass of drab joining material. Perhaps such a failing is inherent in a book of cooperative authorship like the present. For such failing we crave the indulgence of the master-craftsmen as well as the reader.

G. C. Sondhi.

TO THE GATES of LIBERTY

FOREWORD BY PT. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

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"He has brought his people to
the very gates of Liberty.
If they are not opened,
the people of India
will open them."
[Pearl Buck]

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Shrimati Vijayalakshmi Pandit — Shri G. C. Sondhi (Working Editor)

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgements are gratefully made of the co-operation and help form various persons who contributed in the making of this publication in several ways.

For permission for reproductions made in this volume we are very thankful to P. Jawaharlal Nehru, the author and the Signet Press of Calcutta, the publishers of *The Discovery of India*, to Sri R. Palme Dutta, author of *India Today*, to Sri V. D. Savarkar, author of *The Indian war of Independence, 1857*; to Sri Harendranath Mukerjee and Kutub Publishers, author and publishers of *India struggles for Freedom*; to Kitabistan, publishers of Beni Prasad's *The Hindu Muslim Questions*.

The names of other books from which help for compilation and quotations are taken are too numerous, but special mention may be made of the A.I.C.C. publications and Congress Reports made available by the courtesy of Sri Sadiq Ali, permanent Secretary of the A.I.C.C., Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya's classic history of the Congress, and earlier and later histories: Mazumdar's Indian National Evolution, Mrs. Besant's *How India Wrought for Freedom*, Probodh Chandra's *Sixty Years of Congress*, Iyar and Bhandare's *The Congress Caravan*; Dr. Rajendra Prasad's *India Divided* and Dr. S. Ansari's *Pakistan—the Problem of India*; for quotations from Gandhiji to Navjivan Press publications and Dr. Radha Krishnan's book. We are thankful to all these and other writers and publishers from whom we have drawn material and might not have acknowledged it inadvertantly.

For illustrations, we are thankful to the artists whose names are given below, we are specially thankful to Acharya Nandalal Bose and Sri Rathindra Nath Tagore of Vishva Bharati for reproduction of three plates; to Sri Upendra Maharathi, the rising young artist of Bihar for the coloured portrait of Gandhiji and other help, to Sri Kedarnath Chatterji of Modern Review for use of two coloured blocks, and valuable advice, to Bharat Phototype for use of three blocks, to Sri Amal Home of Calcutta Gazetteer for reproduction of a rare photograph of 1906 Congress leaders, to Syed Anisur Rehman of Nai Zindagi, Allahabad for use of numerous photos from his collection, to Miss Sheela Kichlu and Director Publications of the Information Department of Government of India, to Khan Abdul Gani Khan for photos of the Frontier province, to Gopal Chitra Kutir of Delhi, the best press photo studio that we could find in India.

Help in various other ways was specially received from Sri Srinarain Mahtha, member Constituent Assembly of India, Sri K. C. Kothari, Sri Baldev Swaroop, Sri Balwant Rai, Sri Dhiren Rupani, Sri Mohan Lal of the Servant of Peoples Society, and is gratefully acknowledged.

ARTISTS

Acharya Nandalal Bose
: Sketches of Bapu and Abdul Gaffar Khan and several head and tail pieces.

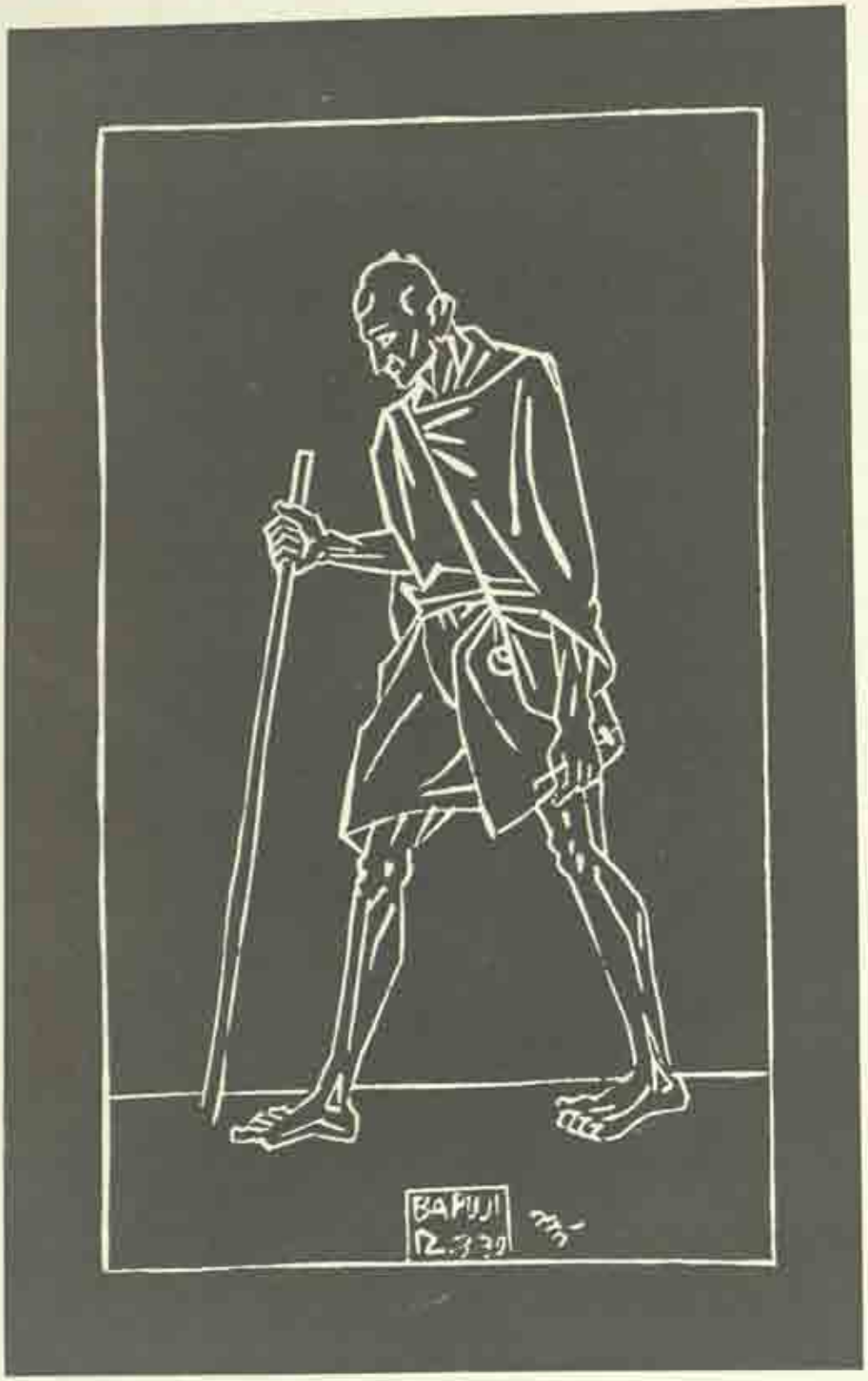
Sri Upendra Maharathi
: Painting of Pilgrim's Progress and other sketches

Sri P. S. Goray of Bombay
: several head and tail piece sketches.

Sri Anil Krishen Bhattacharya of Calcutta Art School
and

Sri P. K. Mura, Calcutta
: several head and tail pieces and panels

Sri Asu Bandopadhyaya
: Cover design with Sri Nandalal Bose's Sketches



BAPUJI

Nandalal Bose

DEDICATED

to

GANDHIJI

in whom India is reborn

BAPU IS GONE: LONG LIVE BAPU

A few days before Bapu was to leave us, Rashtrapati Sri Rajendra Prasad had approached him on our behalf, with a request for permission for the dedication. While expressing his general distaste for such personal adulation, Bapu, gracious as ever, gave this permission.

The dedication stands unaltered. We believe Bapu lives for ever in all that is good and eternal in India.

We had made ready to take a specially bound copy for presentation to Bapu. In this small way we used to light our clay lamps to the sun of his light and earn a kindly smile.

Was not this book attempting a story of a struggle and a resurrection that was the story of Bapu's life work?

We could not imagine that this strangest episode in human history would have a crowning chapter so soon and in this way. With such consumation the stirring drama was to pass into immortality.

An era is now closed. But it seems only a prelude, the opening chapter of a new story in our country and the world. There are no words and the vision is blurred with our tears. A century of history will tell if our generation deserved what it had-Gandhiji living in our midst.



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FOREWORD

This is a book on a worthy theme. To appreciate this period and what has happened during the last quarter of a century in India we shall have to look back after many years have passed and view it in the perspective of history. We are too near it at present to understand it and appraise it aright, and no book can do justice to it. This book is not a history or an appraisal but rather a glimpse into various aspects of this Gandhi era in India's history.

Already a generation has grown up which has no personal knowledge of the feelings and urges of the people of India a quarter of a century ago. They may read about it or they may hear stories. But it is difficult to appreciate that mighty surge of feeling which shook India when Gandhiji first blew his trumpet of non-violence and non-cooperation. Much has happened since then and we have seen many ups and downs. But with every crisis in our history, when lesser men have often failed, Gandhiji has risen a step higher not only in the affections of his countrymen but also in the deep regard for his greatness. Truly this has been a Gandhi era and all of us, who have lived through it, bear some impress of it. India is changing and will change, as it must, but in ages to come, it will still remember and be influenced by the teachings of of this great son of hers. And not India only, but the world will realise more and more the essential truth and effectiveness of this message of his, which is essentially the message of India.

I commend this book to the reader.

Jawaharlal Nehru.

New Delhi,
25, December, 1947.

MESSAGE OF GREETINGS
FROM
PRESIDENT CHIANG KAI-SHEK

(Received by Cable for the Congress Commemoration Volume)

There is something deeply inspiring in the final achievement by a great people of a long cherished dream of national self-government.

During recent years the Indian people have captured the imagination of the world by the consumate genius which they have exhibited in recreating in their vast country the political structure of a sound and enviable national life.

In this achievement they have revealed a heroism and a quality of will which has enriched the saga of the human race.

My greetings and the greetings of the Chinese people go out to you on this great occasion of your historic national achievement.

Five years ago it was the esteemed privilege of Madame Chiang Kaishek and myself to visit India and to meet the leaders of the Indian people.

At that time we had the memorable experience of a delightful meeting with India's great leader Mahatma Gandhi.

We visited you at one of the truly decisive moments in human history.

The war for world freedom had not yet been won. India and China met as allies and co-warriors in the great struggle.

Today we are no longer engaged in a common military enterprise. But the links which were forged in the fires of those years have grown stronger with the coming of peace.

China and India share a common frontier of 3,000 kilometers.

It is a frontier which China knows she can ever leave unguarded because there are no conceivable political differences which can bring conflict between our two peoples.

The 80,00,00,000 people of China and India constituting one-third of the human race possess the common tradition of peace and justice.

As fellow Asiatics, the two peoples will live and continue to stand and, together exert an ever widening influence for that better world order which is the goal of mankind.

May India go forward from this historical year to achieve an increasing measure of national wellbeing and progress.

TRIBUTE TO GANDHIJI

No figure in the world is so incomprehensible to men of the West as is this man of India, Gandhiji. Today as militarists prepare worse weapons and governments vie with one another in armies, the western peoples are in secret despair. They dare not go forward, they cannot go back. In the quiet places of our private hearts those who are wise among us know that we are wrong. Non-violence is right. Only in a non-violent world can life be worth living. Gandhiji will be remembered forever because he has dared to live in non-violence and to teach non-violence resolutely in the midst of war and turbulence, he alone has found and kept the source of peace, both for the individual and for humanity.

Pearl S. Buck

A VISION OF INDIA

(A Message For The Commemoration Volume)

Ever since I entered college, India has always seemed to me a vast, dark phenomenon on the continent of Asia, hiding within itself some deep secrets of the human soul incomprehensible to any one but a Chinese Taoist. Outsiders may now and then catch a glimpse of that mystic light which claims to reveal to us the reality of things apart from the illusions. As I was fairly religious-minded, I tried to comprehend that mystic light. The impression of something deep and dark arose very largely from the terminology and methods of exposition of the Buddhist translations in Chinese. These Buddhist translations give the Chinese people the only metaphysics we knew and seem to promise a voyage down the interminable Ganges of thought. But less attracted by its metaphysics than by its literature, I began to read India's great epics, and for the first time my great admiration for the Hindus as a nation was definitely established.

India first became modern to me, with a modern meaning, when in 1931-1932, as an editor of the CHINA CRITIC, an English weekly published in Shanghai, I got engrossed in Gandhi's match to the sea to make salt with his countrymen, in defiance of the British Empire. Now, it seemed to me indescribably funny that a nation like India should have any relation to a British king or queen. It just seemed to me like a case of downright robbery of a vast, rich nation by somebody away at the northwesterliest tip of Europe. I wrote editorial after editorial in defence of Gandhi's right, which is India's right for freedom. I began to be interested in her brilliant younger son Jawaharlal Nehru. Then India became personal to me. During the World War, when Churchill refused to apply the Atlantic Charter to India, I saw that not only India's cause was lost, but the world's cause of freedom was lost in the maze of prejudices and fossilizations and encrustations inside the cranium of a world leader who, extraordinary to say, still convinced himself that he was fighting for the cause of freedom against empire. The obdurate obstinacy of Churchill to face up to the issue of freedom versus empire during the war is the direct cause why the war was not fought cleanly on that issue and why today we are floundering still more hopelessly in a jungle of conflicting imperialisms.

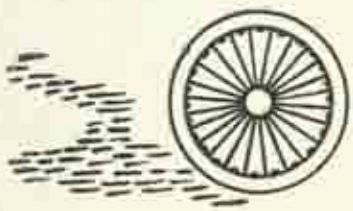
India's cause was and has always been the cause of right. And I am glad the cause of right has won.

Now India at long last has her freedom, the inalienable freedom of every nation to solve her own problems. India, like China, suffers from the handicaps of poverty and illiteracy. But Indians have at last got the freedom to tackle these problems like free men, and that is a great, a very great privilege, once lost to them. Lately I have been more and more impressed by the fact that there is a great waste of human talent in backward countries, and that a good modern democracy means the release of that great human potential for creative activity and for happy living. That, I believe, is the essential problem and goal of all political activity. I am keeping that vision for China, and my Indian friends shall keep that vision for India. So and so alone shall the people of Asia be a constructive force in this destructive, predatory modern world.

Lin Yutang

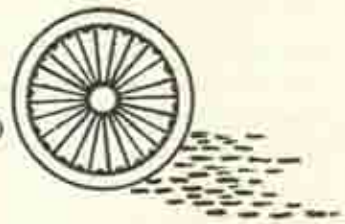
BOOK I

INDIA THROUGH THE AGES



CHAPTER I.

AN IMAGE OF THE MOTHERLAND



by

Sri C. C. Sondhi

Many-tinted Dawn! The Immortal daughter of Heaven!
Young, white robed, come with thy purple steeds;
Follow the path of the dawnings the world has been given.
Follow the path of the dawn the world still needs:
Darkly shining dusk, thy sister, has sought her abiding,
Fear not to trouble her dreams; daughters ye twain of the Sun,
Dusk and Dawn bringing birth! O Sister! your path is unending;
Dead are the first who have watched; when shall our walking be done?
(Rigveda)

Thine is the image in every temple; Mother, I bow to thee.
(Bandematoram Song)

IN our country, we begin a new day and start on a journey with the repeating of a name and looking into a face and contemplating upon what is sacred and beautiful. And as we emerge to-day through our darkest night into a new dawn and set upon the joyous road that opens before us, we can do no better than begin with the name and vision and understanding of the Motherland.

This task, however, is not so simple as it would seem. The nightmare yet clouds our awakening. Freedom has come, but the legacy of slavery hides its face. It is not quite simple even to fit a name to our land among the many by which it has been known—Jambu-dwip, Bharatvarsha, Sapta Sindhu, Aryavarta, Hindustan or Hind, or India. It is strange thought that we have to seek to know, not only what is India but have first to set upon a voyage of re-discovery of our very being.

The British, it seems made a profound discovery: that there was no such thing as India. Their wise men propagated this theory long and wide. This basic truth about India was stressed by Sir John Strachy:

"This is the first and most essential thing to learn about India that there is not and never was an India or even any country of India, possessing according to European ideas, anything of unity physical, political, social and religious, no Indian nation, no people of India: of which we hear so much." (Sir John Strachy: "India: its administration and progress." 1888 page).

Seeley, the great Pundit of imperialist political theory, pointed out that the notion of India, rested upon a "vulgar error", of political science and that it was only a "geographical expression". Down to our day when the Simon Seven reported with brilliant insight on India:—

"The variegated assemblage of races and creeds," "with rigid complication of innumerable castes," with its 122 languages, "in the almost infinite diversity in its religious aspects," the "basic opposition of Hindus and Muslims," "This conglomeration of races and religions," "congeries of heterogenous masses".

Then Providence it would seem stepped in, in the guise of Great Britain, and gave this mythical chaos a shape and substance, with as was natural—varying fissures, and holes, and tendency to fall apart. The whole history of the British rule has been accordingly, occupied in bringing cohesion, of varying degrees, till, in our day, there was a crystallization of India into "two nations" and two countries not to say of the numerous sovereign states and less politically conscious communities and helpless special interests. And the prophecy of the Arch-angel of the British imperialism, Mr. Churchill came to be—with what Mr. Atlee called the "Fulfilment of the British Mission" in India, and it is difficult indeed to find India in the "dull roar and scream of carnage and confusion" that does come about with this fulfilment.

But, though for a time we lose the cherished dream of a politically united India it is infinitely better than the unity of a common overall slavery that was our lot. The vision of India still comes to the mind serene and radiant like the snow peaks of the Himalayas seen through passing clouds. We do not lose consciousness of the essential unity which lies deep and eternal under the varying colour patches of India's historical maps.

What then is this India? How comes it to be an inspiration, a deeply moving experience, a kinship and continuous heritage of diverse people, in diverse times, a living and deathless entity, an embodiment with a mind and face, intimately known and yet full of mysterious wonder, like a dearly beloved person?

No doubt the shape and spirit of this myriad faceted personality that is India is complex and unponderable, like the substance of a dream, coming down in the subconscious awareness of the race, a millennium of generations, "births and rebirths" of its people. And our poets and sages have synthesised the dreams with reality and made its images in a thousand ways. But partly the entity of India is amenable to analytical survey and study.

Geography is no doubt a major factor in both the emotional oneness of a country and its homogeneous and special social socio-cultural pattern. And when we think of India with a feeling of fondness, we think of places and people we have seen. The sublime beauty of nature in India is the main theme of our earliest literature—Rigveda and the modern "national anthem"—the Bande-mataram song. The first picture that always comes to my mind, and lights up the dark recesses of consciousness is of "Nanga parbat" tower of shining whiteness breaking suddenly on the view, against dark blue and green overtones of mountains and forests, in an Himalayan trek. Other pictures come in tumultuous procession—the expanse of the Ganges in the morning sun, with the crowds on the ghats, the dignity and suffering on peasant faces, the grace and rhythm of a team of village women working in the paddy field, a journey with Gandhiji, and a session of the Congress, the coming of the monsoon. The mind's eye passes like a "cloud messenger" over various parts, in a cycle of seasons. And everybody and every mood has its own picture gallery.

The sum total of physical environment and common way of life and occupation has a remarkable effect in transforming and harmonising racial types. We see this phenomena in nature. In the fastness of the valley of Gurez in Kashmir, trout of drab grey colour is put in the stream but soon develops rainbow colours. It is conjectured that the rich variety of flowers on the mountain sides all round acts in some mysterious way through the retina of this fish to bring about this change. It has been remarked how in the United States, the common way of life is producing similarity not only in the thought and modes but even in a typical American face and build of its people, coming from a variety of racial stocks. Such a standardisation is much more marked

in a country with a mechanical civilisation than in a country where life is close to the bewildering variety of Nature. Also a centralised State is like a duplicating machine in its effects. But there can be other factors of unity; and unity is not necessarily at the cost of diversity of appearance.

The geography of India has walled in a subcontinent in a remarkable way from the rest of the world. It is like a closely guarded sanctuary in its insularity. No real strategic barriers cross its vast area. But there is a rich variey of landscape, climate flora and fauna. It is this environment, perhaps that gives India, a distinctness of character, a typical outlook, diversity that is blended and harmonised by its sheer multitudinous variety and constant contact, producing a racial genius for adaptation and fusion, and a common socio-economic structure. This common economic and social structure, conditions of life and occupation, in their turn intensify the type.

The very antiquity of history in India, the coming and living together of various people and civilisations has given her a mellowness and maturity of outlook that tolerates and systhesises differences, like a biological quality. Also this long process crystallised into common patterns of thought and institutions. The high water-mark of achievement in philosophy, art and civilisations, naturally reached repeatedly, in such long continuity, left rich and homogenous soil and strata of a culture. New currents of ideas and civilisations were only tributaries to this main stream. There was an ever-increasing diversity of appearance with a deep laid unity of the essential elements in the life of the individual and the society.

It is also the geography of India, the loveliness of its various scenic beauty and the poetic inheritance of its people from an early dawn, that deifies the mystery and enchantment of Nature, that makes India a part of the life of its people.

Was it the geography of India, its variety and distance of horizons, and its climate and the misty antiquity of its history, that joined together to give the Indian mind it's peculiar quality of quest and harmony, of transcending space and time, of living at the same time, in the past and the present, on earth and in the stars.

And was not this another name for the gift of the highest form of art expression, the master-touch that integrates the inner experience with the outer world and blends the truth and beauty of an ideal with life, the art that becomes a part of and is indistinguishable from the daily life of the people, when ideas and emotional and aesthetic experience are given form, carved in stone, painted in caves, sung in folk music and the drama of history and rhythm of nature intermingle with life and ritual.

The racial memory in India goes back into something like geological ages, where history merges with legend. And the mass of Indian people believe in endless cycles of civilisations, ages of glory and decay, of repeated coming of gods and heroes, kings and sages, half remembered, half imagined pictures of splendour and disaster, dimly seen pinnacles of achievement. This is India's weakness and strength. It gives a serenity and fortitude, a capacity to live with an aristocratic spirit in a state of beggary, unaffected by vicissitudes. Literature and art has made this legendary past a part of the daily life and practice of the people. The life in the village huts and city slum is broken and coloured and made bearable by seasonal festivals, recital and songs, play-acting and story-telling connected with legendary heroes—and their lives provide the norm of individual, family and social conduct.

The antiquity of history and this gift of imagination in India have endowed its geographical entity with a living personality in a way that is unique. There are rivers, trees and animals that have familiar legendary history and human attributes. There is hardly a spot in this vast country from end to end, which is not hallowed with the associations of a great name event or institution. The mountains and plains, rivers and forests are alive with the memory of a hermitage, an itenerary, abode or scene of activity of a Rama, Krishna or Buddha. Everywhere in India the air is full of a feeling of wonder, of a pageant that

has just passed out of sight. Then there are the numerous shrines, and monuments, and the great places of pilgrimage set in the four corners of the land in Nature's loveliest spots, drawing thousands of men and women, from places thousands of miles apart, diverse in language, cults and modes. They came in days when walking and bullock carts were the only means of transport and come even now.

Those factors of deep attachment to the land and a common pattern of life and art are still further strengthened by a process of chronological synchronisation, by minute following of the days and hours of a common calendar, in the seasonal celebrations and day to day ritual and observations.

This aspect of Indian life is both a promoter and manifestation of a deeper common outlook, manner and substance of imagination, belief and expression. It is further revealed in daily life and work of the people, in the ceremony and music of birth, marriage and death, in sowing and harvesting, in art craft and daily routine of life.

It goes deeper into the whole set of ideas and scale of values, the place of idealism or inner life and its synthesis with material life, coexistence of a line of hermit Kings and a highly sophisticated civilisation, of the place of and relations between the individual and the social group, the structure of family and village economy, the comparative unimportance of the central State, friendliness towards the world and kinship with the animate and inanimate universe. Even the distortions and defects that grew in this pattern were similar at different places and periods, and repeatedly gave rise to similar resurgent movements, and with ideas and leadership that are remarkably alike.

India, like other countries has seen many vicissitudes but its essential pattern of thought and institutions has survived and come down to our day. This endurance becomes truly visible when we compare it with other old civilisations and find them either totally extinct or totally transformed. There is nothing left in Egypt or Greece or Rome of its ancient civilisation, except in excavations and ruins. There is nothing to be proud of in the antiquity of ideas and institutions. But the continuity shows their vitality.

This continuty and vitality is not an expression of wooden changelessness, but rather of a capacity for change, a special aptitude for adaptation and evolution, readiness to receive and assimilate what is harmonious, and to resist and discard what is foreign.

India has been the tryst of various peoples and cultures their battleground and common abode. There has been conflict, but largely it has been resolved into fusion or at least a harmonious blending, adding to the richness of the main cultural pattern.

The decadent periods in our history are co-extent with the circumstances when we lost our power to change and become rigid and static, and all the disease and decay in our body politic is traceable to this.

There is a danger of inertia developing in old ideas and institutions when the meaning is lost and husk preserved. Sometimes new ideas come with foreign free-booters and there is a natural defensive shutting of doors against both. Indians had such periods of stagnation, and many of the well-known evils of Indian society like caste and untouchability and purdah, came thus into being and were stereotyped in this way. But the inherent vitality of the Indian system repeatedly threw up forces of change and a new adaptation. The British domination has been for over a century the most potent medium of stagnations in our long history. Indirectly and deliberatedly the mediaval state of India was frozen and made to stand still, like the moving cavalcades carved on our temple walls. The world in the meanwhile moved fast and far.

The purpose of looking back into our past is not to go back to it. India has to guard against a revivalism which would be a natural reaction to what the West has done to us and to Pakistan. In many ways present day Indians have to be their own anscestors. But also while marvelling at the progress of the West, there is a feeling of doubt and

dismay. This progress has perhaps been irrelated in some ways and in a circle of retrogression in other ways. The subhuman standard of living of the mass of our people makes us look with longing eye to the progress in the West. But the common man even in the West has been reduced into "a calories-consuming unit, a man-hour producing machine." The ever increasing mastery over forces of nature has not increased the mastery of the individual man over himself and his environment. The common man is as helpless or even more helpless and moved about by giants of mass production and state planning and systems as he was by an earthquake, a storm or an epidemic. The States are neither wise not just always. In fact the progress in science and technology has ourstripped by far the progress in social organisations. Obsolete and parochial divisions and rivalaries still rule and periodically threaten the mass of man. The ever increasing accumulation of production and comforts, their wider distribution, better security and provision of social amenities and service is interrupted in every generation with destruction and misery that surpasses the past in every succeeding crisis. The Atomic Bomb is the symbol and measure of the modern world in the power and weakness of man, individually and in the group.

This progress makes us pause and turn towards other set of values and the constructive pattern that was based on them, and the echo of which comes to us down to our day. The search for India thus becomes a matter of importance. It is an elusive quest but well worth pursuing. For it is a quest not only for the power of recovery and remoulding of our peoples' destinies, but of providing—it may be—a pattern, for a new world-order of which we are a part.

It is not intended, neither it is possible to attempt to give in any adequate measure the account of ancient history and civilisations of India in this section. Our purpose is only to provide a background to out times and incidently give 'glimpses' that would stimulate further study. Even this is possible in a rather sketchy manner.

But in a way the study of this age-old pattern of India is traceable in subsequent parts of this book. This is natural as the writers are dealing with movements and attainment that has drawn inspiration and blue prints from the changing and constant Indian pattern and this has been specially so in the Gandhian era which is the central story of this book, and when a revolution and renaissance was born that was unique in history in its ideology and methods and is only explainable by the heritage of the past. For Gandhi is writing an unfinished chapter of the ancient Indian history. And Gandhi is not an accident but part of an old heritage.





CHAPTER II.

INDIA AS AN INTEGRAL UNITY

by

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INDIA has been divided, but only politically for administrative purposes. The division cannot affect India's fundamental unity, cultural, economic, and geographical. Nature has fashioned the whole of India from Kashmir to Cape Comorin, as a well-defined unit isolated from the rest of the world by indisputable boundaries, which are permanent natural fixtures, the mountains of the north, and the seas of the South. And even deep down this geographical unity on the surface, Nature has built up for the country an underlying geological unity founded on the rocks of ages. The underground rocks of India as the source of her mineral wealth do not acknowledge the artificial geographical boundaries of her administrative divisions. They revel in one fundamental unity which finds its continuous expression in a continental subterranean expanse underlying and embracing within its comprehensive sweep, the geographical areas of different provinces and states, regardless of the artificial boundaries which divide them above. India's geographical unity, thus laid broad and deep in the rocky foundations of her geological structure, mocks at human designs for its division which does not rest on any natural or physical grounds. To take one example, the best of India's coal, and more than 98% of her total output of coal, on which depends so largely the economic prosperity and industrial development of the country are found in the Permian rocks concentrated in a part of Bengal, in Bihar and in Orissa. Then there are the great coal-fields of the Godavari Valley continuing through Hyderabad and Madras up to the sea at Coconada. Thus the subterranean coal-deposits in Nature's plan have appropriated a territory of their own and defy the changing regional divisions of human plans.

On the basis of this precious and unique heritage in the shape of a well defined country, its inhabitants, the Hindus, built it up through the ages as their motherland, and national home which they deified as an object of worship. The Hindu's love of his mother country or patriotism is elevated into a religion. His worship of *Desa-matrika*. The mother of all mothers, has its own prayers and *Mantras*. A modern Rishi has revealed and prescribed the *mantram* of *Vande Mataram* for worship of mother India. A sanskrit

text has thus glorified the mother country: "*Janani Janmabhumischa Svargadapi Gariyasi*: "the mother and the motherland are greater than Heaven itself." The great religious text known as the *Srimadbhagavatam* describes India as the chosen land fashioned by the gods *(devanirmitam sthanam)* who are very anxious to descend from their celestial abodes to be born here as mortals.

The Hindus through the ages have cultivated a clear conception of the physical form and dimensions of their mother country they are thus worshipping. All their worship begins with the meditation of the mother land as the preliminary purification, defining it as the land of the seven principal sacred rivers collectively invoked at the holy bath:

"Ganga cha Yamune Chaiva Godaveri
Saraswati I
Narmade Sindhu-Kaveri Jalesmin
Sannidhim Kuru" II

"O ye Ganga, Yamuna Godavari, Saraswati, Narmada Sindhu (Indus) and Kaveri commingle ye thy sacred waters in the water I am sprinkling on my head for purification." This prayer lead the mind in meditation to fix itself upon the physical form, the image of mother India, extending in one sweep through the lands watered by the sacred rivers, from the land of the Indus in the north-west to that of the Ganga and Yamuna, the Narmada and Godavari, in a continuous stretch of territory the whole of which is the holy land of the Hindus. At the dawn of India's history and civilisation, the land of the Kubha (Kabul) and Gomati (Gomal), of Suvastu (Swat) and Krumu (Kurrum) is also held as equally sacred in that primary work of scripture, the Rigveda which is the earliest work not merely of India but of the world. Thus the lands now known as Afghanistan and Baluchistan had been counted as integral parts and limbs of mother India, whose *viratdeha* receives the national worship of the unlettered millions of India united by a common religion transcending all geographical barriers and political boundaries. With a common prayer on the lips of all Indians, as such, whether they belong to the valley of the Kabul and the Indus, or Ganges and Jumna or Narmada, Godavari and Kaveri, the frontier Indian and the South Indian, the Indians of U.P. and C.P., feel between them a deeper spiritual affinity and a sense of brotherhood which is the strongest foundation of nationalism. They are fellow citizens of a Kingdom of spirit. Another national prayer presents the Mother Country from a different angle of vision. It contemplates it as the land of the seven principal sacred cities, each of which is a centre of national history and culture, charged with the inspiring associations of its greatest characters. These sacred cities, are thus enumerated in the prayer:

"Ayodhya Mathura Maya Kasi
Kanchi Avantika I
Puri Dwaravati Chaiva Saptaite
Mokshadayika" II

These are the places which every Hindu must visit on pilgrimage as an aid to emancipation (Moksha). And these are distributed throughout India among its different parts in North, South, East and West, so that the pilgrim in visiting them all, will practically have a circuit of the whole of India and obtain a direct experience of the vastness of its physical size, and the enchanting diversity of its natural features, its bewildering sociological variety, and the fundamental unity, underlying all this variety as the One in the Many. The religious life of the Hindu India is centred in these cities. Ayodhya is the city of Rama. The hero of the Ramayana of Valmiki and Tulsidas, based on the story of conflict between Rama and Ravana, a conflict between two cultures and ideologies, Aryan and Non-Aryan, of which these two were the representatives and exponents. Mathura is the holy city of Lord Krishna who occupies such a large place in India's political and religious history. Maya is that beautiful place in India now known as Haradvara where the Ganges descends from the heights of the Himalayan snows on the plains, Kasi is the city of Viswanath or Siva, Kanchi is the joint city of both Siva and Vishnu with its two divisions called Siva-Kanchi and Vishnu-Kanchi. Avanti is the city of Mahakala in central India. The seventh city is the city of Dvaraka also associated

with Krishna. The entire area covered by these seven cities is the holy land of the Hindu. A third prayer indicates the physical framework of the Mother Country, as the land of the seven principal mountain chains forming, as it were, her ribs and backbone. These are Mahendra (Eastern Ghats), Malaya and Sahya (Southern and Northern parts of Western Ghats), Riksha (eastern Vindhya or mountains of Gondwana), Vindhya, and Pariyatra (western Vindhya, up to the Aravalis) :

"Mahendra Malaya Sahya Suktimana
Riksha Paravatah I
Vindhyashcha Pariyatrasha Saptaite
Kulaparvatah" II

There are many other conceptions of the Mother Country as comprehending the whole of India from end to end in Hindu religious works and history. Every Hindu, irrespective of the sect to which he belongs, as a worshipper of Vishnu, Siva, or Sakti has his own holy places and shrines dedicated to his Deity. The names of these holy places he has to recite every day as part of his worship. The whole of India from Amarnath in Kashmir up to Rameswaram in extreme south, from Dvaraka at the westernmost point to Puri at the easternmost point, is covered with a net-work of shrines consecrated to these principal Deities of Hinduism. These are distributed throughout the length and breadth of the Indian continent so as to render all its parts equally sacred to every Hindu. Thus the different sects of Hinduism are at one in enjoining upon their respective votaries pilgrimage to their particular holy places in different parts of India and thereby keep alive in them a sense of the physical identity of their Mother Country, its integral unity. In this way, even sectarianism is an aid to nationalism. Every votary of a particular sect or creed of Hinduism is thus led to cultivate an All-Indian outlook subduing provincial or local narrowness. Religion gives to the Hindu the basis of internationalism and of citizenship of the Kingdom of the spirit, which knows of no geographical boundaries or national frontiers.

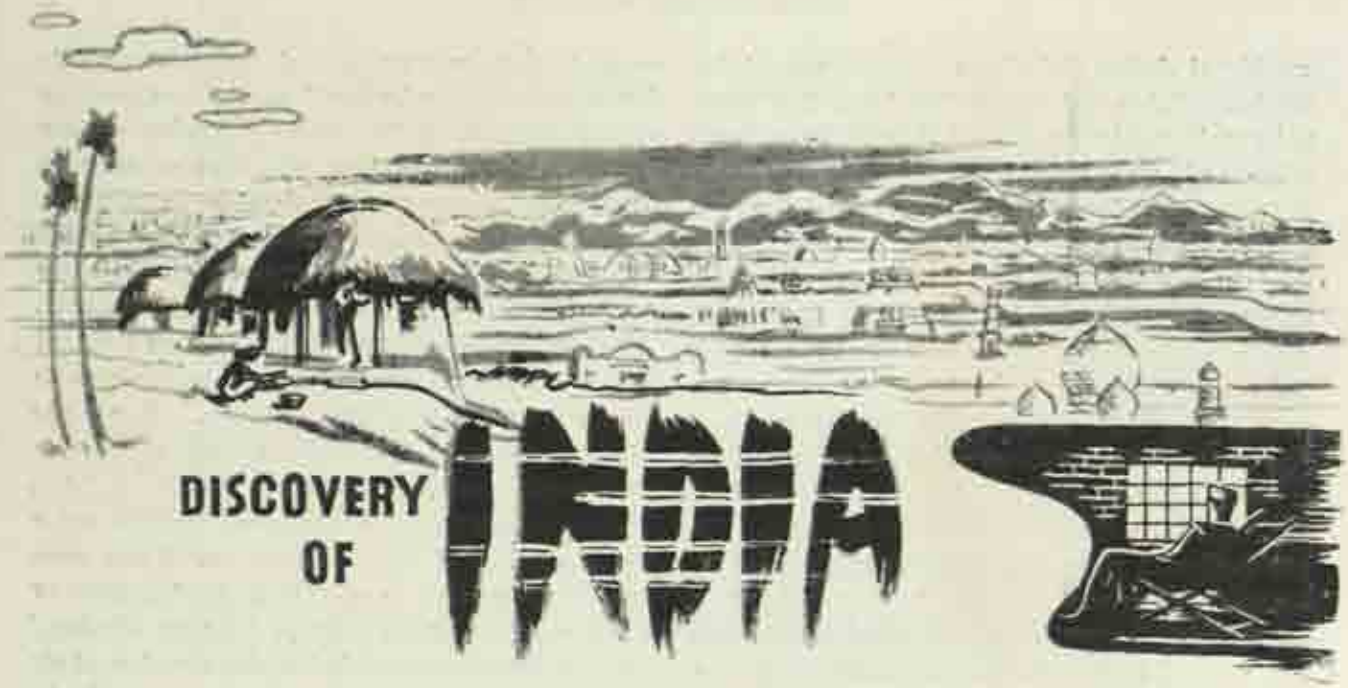
And in the story of Sati, the Perfect Wife, the Model of Chastity, who can miss the significance of the 52 Pithasthanas where fell fragements of Her smitten body ? And one finger fell in Calcutta, and that is still the Kalighat, and the tongue fell at Jwalamuki (Kangra) in the north Punjab and appear to this day as licking tongues of fire from underneath the ground. And the left hand fell in Benares and has been permanently enshrined in its temple of Annapurna, the Mother of Plenty feeding all !

In the sprit of this mode of worshipping the country, the great philosopher Sankaracharya located the chief centers of his teaching at its four extreme points : Jyotirmath at Badri-Kedar in the far North, Sarada-math in Dvaraka at the westernmost point, Govardhan-math at Puri in the east end, and Sringeri-math in the far south. These were the four capitals of his spiritual empire won by his intellectual *digivijaya*. On the same design have been planned and placed the four Tirthas of Svetaganga in the east, Dhanustirtha in the south, Gomati Kunda in the west and Tapta Kunda in the north ; four tanks, Pampa, Vindu, Narayana, and Manas Sarovar in the south, east, west and north ; temples of the sun at Konarka in the east, Mulasthanapura (Multan) in the Punjab, and Suryapura or Surat in the west.

It will thus appear that this spiritual conception of the Mother Country as a sacred entity has no place for its secular divisions for political and administrative purposes. Religion cannot conceive of such division which only operates on the plane of the mundance. Spirit conquers matter. Thought is free of all barriers. That is why Dvaraka in the State of Baroda is as dear and sacred to the Hindus in all parts of India as is Puri in the Union Province of Orissa or Benares in the U. P. The continental sacredness of Amarnath in Kashmir vies with that of Rameswaram at the southern extremity. All Hindus will flock from all parts of India to Gaya as the holy place prescribed for the worship of ancestors. Religion does not recognise the earthly barriers of geography or politics. Loyalty to India as a whole transcends all sectional or local loyalties as the supreme religion. The

worship of Mother India is an integral part of the Hindus' religion, and her visible form, her image to be meditated is thus described in all its majesty, might, and glory in the graphic words of Poet Rabindranath Tagore depicting the *Virat-Deha* of the Mother, with her sacred feet washed by the deep blue ocean of the south, the Himalyas forming her forehead, their eternal snows her crown, while out of her breasts flow streams of ambrosia in the Jhanvi and Jamuna. Thus the federation of the whole of India which has been politically divided in history into numerous states of changing boundaries has been an accomplished fact of Hindu thought through the ages. No Hindu should allow the present partition of the country to interfere with his religion and duty of worshipping Mother India in the majestic unity of her eternal form, with the various prayers prescribed by his Sastras and with his observance of the practice of pilgrimage to all his holy places up to the sacred Kabul river on the frontier, the holy city of Takshasila (Taxila), the site of Janamejaya sacrifice as related to the Mahabharata, the region of Gandhara (modern Peshawar and Rawalpindi districts) singled out for its sanctity in all literature from the Rig-veda downwards, and to numerous other places of Pakistan full of memories and monuments of Buddhism which devout Chinese pilgrims used to visit and worship on their way to India. There are other shrines and sacred places bound up with the glorious lives of the Sikh Gurus extending over the country, the monuments and shrines associated with mediaeval saints and kings, which are equally cherished by the Muslims and Hindus with a common reverence. All these have made the country a single sacred unit and constitute the strongest tie binding its people in an indissoluble kinship. If not the Muslims, the three hundreed millions of Hindus (in the wider category including Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs, etc.) must always remain one in spirit under the inspiration of their *Dharma* which lays upon them the obligation to worship undivided India as their national deity. As J. Ramsay Macdonal (British Premier) puts it in his introduction of my *Fundamental Unity of India* (London, 1924) "India and Hinduism are organically related like body and soul." It is to be hoped that the new dominion of Pakistan will afford full facilities to Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists and others travelling on pilgrimage to so many of their holy places which are situated within its boundaries and jurisdiction and which make Pakistan as sacred to them as any other part of India.





CHAPTER III

An Indian steeped in the west discovers India from the window of a prison and records his exciting search and experience in a philosophical-lyrical history. The Discovery of India.[1]

There are more learned scholars who have dived deep into the ocean of ancient learning. The previous chapter was from one of the most eminent of these. But it is interesting to reprodnce the reactions of a man of action—and one of the finest minds of contemporary world to the impact of ancient India. In this and some subsequent parts, we have taken the liberty to select parts of chapters and change their sequence to suit our plan.

1. THE SEARCH FOR INDIA

I was on a great voyage of discovery and the land of India and the people of India lay spread out before me. India with all her infinite charm and variety began to grow upon me more and more, and yet the more I saw of her, the more I realized how very difficult it was for me or for anyone else to grasp the ideas she had embodied. It was not her wide spaces that eluded me, or even her diversity, but some depth of soul which I could not fathom, though I had occasional and tantalizing glimpses of it. She was like some ancient palimpsest on which layer upon layer of thought and reverie had been inscribed, and yet no succeeding layer had completely hidden or erased what had been written previously. All of these exist together in our conscious or subsconscious selves, though we may not be aware of them, and they had gone to build up the complex and mysterious personality of India. That sphinx-like face with its elusive and sometimes mocking smile was to be seen throughout the length and breadth of the land. Though outwardly there was diversity and infinite variety among our people, everywhere there was that tremendous impress of oneness, which had held all of us together for ages past, whatever political fate or misfortune had befallen us. The unity of India was no longer merely an intellectual conception for me : it was an emotional experience which overpowered me. That essential unity had been so powerful that no political division, no disaster or catastrophe, had been able to overcome it.

1. Discovery of India by Jawaharlal Nehru.

2. THE PANORAMA OF INDIA'S PAST

I stood on a mound of Mohenjo-daro in the Indus Valley in the North-west of India, and all around me lay the houses and streets of this ancient City that is said to have existed over five thousand years ago; and even then it was an old and well-developed civilization. 'The Indus civilization,' writes Professor Childe, 'represents a very perfect adjustment of human life to a specific environment that can only have resulted from years of patient effort. And it has endured: it is already specifically Indian and forms the basis of modern Indian culture. Astonishing thought: that any culture or civilization should have this continuity for five or six thousand years or more; and not in a static, unchanging sense, for India was changing and progressing all the time. She was coming into intimate contact with the Persians, the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Chinese, the Arabs, the Central Asians, and the peoples of the Mediterranean. But though she influenced them and was influenced by them, her cultural basis was strong enough to endure. What was the secret of this strength? Where did it come from?

I read her history and read also a part of her abundant ancient literature and powerfully impressed by the vigour of the thought, the clarity of the language and the richness of the mind that lay behind it. I journeyed through India in the company of mighty travellers from China and western and central Asia who came here in the remote past and left records of their travels. I thought of what India had accomplished in eastern Asia, in Angkor, Borobudur and many other places. I wandered over the Himalayas which are closely connected with old myth and legend and which have so much influenced our thought and literature. My love of the mountains and my kinship with Kashmir especially drew me to them, and I saw there not only the life and vigour and beauty of the present but also the memoried loveliness of ages past. The mighty rivers of India that flow from this great mountain barrier into the plains of India attracted me and reminded me of innumerable phases of our history. The Indus or *Sindhu*, from which our country came to be called India and Hindustan, and across which races and tribes and caravans and armies have come for thousand of years; the Brahmaputra, rather cut off from the main current of history but living in old story, forcing its way into India through deep chasms cut in the heart of the north-eastern mountains, and then flowing calmly in a gracious sweep between mountain and wooded plain; the Jumna, round which cluster so many legends of dance, of fun and play; and the Ganga, above all the rivers of India, which has held India's heart captive and has drawn uncounted millions to her banks since the dawn of history. The story of the Ganga, from her source to the sea, from old times to new, is the story of India's civilization and culture, of the rise and fall of empires, of great and proud cities, of the adventure of man and the quest of the mind which has so occupied India's thinkers, of richness and fulfilment of life as well as its denial and renunciation, of ups and downs, and growth and decay, of life and death.

I visited old monuments and ruins and ancient sculptures and frescoes—Ajanta, Ellora, the Elephanta Caves and other places—and I also saw the lovely buildings of a later age in Agra and Delhi where every stone told its story of India's past.

In my own city of Allahabad or in Hardwar I would go to the greatest bathing festivals, the *Kumbh Mela*, and see hundreds of thousands of people come, as their forbears had come for thousands of years from all over India, to bathe in the Ganga. I would remember descriptions of these festivals written thirteen hundred years ago by Chinese pilgrims and others, and even then these *melas* were ancient and lost in an unknown antiquity. What was the tremendous faith, I wondered, that had drawn our people for untold generations to this famous river of India?

These journeys and visits of mine, with the background of my reading, gave me an insight into the past. To a somewhat bare intellectual understanding was added an emotional appreciation,

and gradually a sense of reality began to creep in to my mental picture of India, and the land of my forefathers became peopled with living beings, who laughed and wept, loved and suffered: and among them were men who seemed to know life and understand it, and out of their wisdom they had built a structure which gave India a cultural stability which lasted for thousands of years. Hundreds of vivid pictures of this past filled my mind, and they would stand out as soon as I visited a particular place associated with them. At Sarnath, near Benares, I would almost see the Buddha preaching his first sermon, and some of his recorded words would come like a distant echo to me through two thousand five hundred years. Ashoka's pillars of stone with their inscriptions would speak to me in their magnificent language and tell me of a man who, though an emperor, was greater than any king or emperor. At Fatehpur-Sikri, Akbar, forgetful of his empire, was seated holding converse and debate with the learned of all faiths, curious to learn something new and seeking an answer to the eternal problem of man.

Thus slowly the long panorama of India's history unfolded itself before me, with its ups and downs, its triumphs and defeats. There seemed to me something unique about the continuity of a cultural tradition through five thousand years of history, of invasion and upheaval, a tradition which was widespread among the masses and powerfully influenced them. Only China has had such a continuity of tradition and cultural life. And this panorama of the past gradually merged into the unhappy present, when India, for all her past greatness and stability, was a slave country, an appendage of Britain,, and all over the world terrible and devasting war was raging and brutalizing humanity. But that vision of five thousand years gave me a new perspective and the burden of the present seemed to grow lighter. The hundred and eighty years of British rule in India were just one of the unhappy interludes in her long story; she would find herself again: already the last page of this chapter was being written. The world also will survive the horror of today and build itself anew on fresh foundations.

3. BHARATMATA

Sometimes as I reached a gathering, a great roar of welcome would greet me: *Bharat Mata Ki Jai*-Victory to Mother India! I would ask them unexpectedly what they meant by that cry, who was this *Bharat Mata*. Mother India, whose victory they wanted? My question would amuse them and surprise them and then, not knowing exactly what to answer, they would look at each other and at me. I persisted in my questioning. At last a vigorous *Jat*, wedded to the soil from immemorial generations, would say that it was the *Dharti*, the good earth of India, that they meant. What earth? Their particular village patch, or all the patches in the district or province, or in the whole of India? And so question and answer went on, till they would ask me impatiently to tell them all about it. I would endeavour to do so and explain that India was all this that they had thought, but it was much more. The mountains and the rivers of India, and the forests and the broad fields, which gave us food, were all dear to us, but what counted ultimately were the people like them and me, who were spread out all over this vast land. *Bharat Mata*, Mother India, was essentially these millions of people, and victory to her meant victory to these people. You are parts of this *Bharat Mata*, I told them, you are in a manner yourselves *Bharat Mata*, and as this idea slowly soaked into their brains, their eyes would light up as if they had made a great discovery.

4. THE VARIETY AND UNITY OF INDIA

The diversity of India is tremendous: it is obvious: it lies on the surface and anybody can see it. It concerns itself with physical appearance as well as with certain mental habits and traits. There is little in common, to outward seeming, between the Pathan of the North-West and the Tamil in the far South. Their racial stocks are not the same, though there may be common strands running through them: they differ in face and figure, food and clothing, and, of course, language. In the North-West Frontier Province there is already the breath of Central Asia, and many a custom there, as in Kashmir, reminds one of

the countries on the other side of the Himalayas. Pathan popular dances are singularly like Russian Cossack dancing. Yet with all these differences, there is no mistaking the impress of India on the Pathan, as this is obvious on the Tamil. This is not surprising, for these border lands and indeed Afghanistan also, were united with India for thousands of years. The old Turkish and other races who inhabited Afghanistan and parts of Central Asia before the advent of Islam were largely Buddhists, and earlier still, during the period of the Epics, Hindus. The frontier area was one of the principal centres of old Indian culture and it abounds still with ruins of monuments and monasteries and, especially, of the great university of Taxila, which was at the height of its fame two thousand years ago, attracting students from all over India as well as different parts of Asia. Changes of religion made a difference but could not change entirely the mental backgrounds which the people of those areas had developed.

The Pathan and the Tamil are two extreme examples: the others lie somewhere in between. All of them have their distinctive features, all of them have still more the distinguishing mark of India. It is fascinating to find how the Bengalees, the Marathas, the Gujratis, the Tamils, the Andhras, the Oriyas, the Assamese, the Canarese, the Malayalis, the Sindhis, the Punjabis, the Pathans, the Kashmiris, the Rajputs and the great central block comprising the Hindustani speaking people, have retained their peculiar characteristics for hundreds of years, have still more or less the same virtues and failings of which old tradition or record tells us, and yet have been throughout these ages distinctively Indian, with the same national heritage and the same set of moral and mental qualities. There was something living and dynamic about this heritage which showed itself in ways of living and a philosophical attitude to life and its problems. Ancient India, like ancient China, was a world in itself, a culture and a civilization which gave shape to all things. Foreign influences poured in and often influenced that culture and were absorbed. Disruptive tendencies gave rise immediately to an attempt to find a synthesis. Some kind of dream of unity has occupied the mind of India since the dawn of civilization. That unity was not conceived as something imposed from outside, a standardization of externals or even of beliefs. It was something deeper and, within its fold, the widest tolerance of belief and custom was practised and every variety acknowledged and even encouraged.

Differences, big or small, can always be noticed even within a national group, however closely bound together it may be. The essential unity of that group becomes apparent when it is compared to another national group, though often the differences between two adjoining groups fade out or intermingle near the frontiers, and modern developments are tending to produce a certain uniformity everywhere. In ancient and medieval times, the idea of the modern nation was non-existent, and feudal, religious, racial or cultural bonds had more importance. Yet I think that at almost any time in recorded history an Indian would have felt more or less at home in any part of India, and would have felt as a stranger and alien in any other country. He would certainly have felt less of a stranger in countries which had partly adopted his culture or religion. Those who professed a religion of non-Indian origin and coming to India settled down there, became distinctively Indian in the course of a few generations, such as Christians, Jews, Parsis, Moslems. Indian converts to some of these religions never ceased to be Indians in spite of a change of faith. All these were looked upon in other countries as Indians and foreigners, even though there might have been a community of faith between them.

Today, when the conception of nationalism has developed much more, Indians in foreign countries inevitably form a national group and hang together for various purposes, in spite of their internal differences. An Indian Christian is looked upon as an Indian wherever he may go. An Indian Moslem is considered an Indian in Turkey or Arabia or Iran or any other country where Islam is the dominant religion.

All of us, I suppose, have varying pictures of our native land and no two persons will think

exactly alike. When I think of India, I think of many things: of broad fields dotted with innumerable small villages: of towns and cities I have visited: of the magic of the rainy season which pours life into the dry parched-up land and converts it suddenly into a glistening expanse of beauty and greenery, of great rivers and flowing water: of the Khyber Pass in all its bleak surroundings: of the southern tip of India: of people, individually and in the mass: and, above all, of the Himalayas, snow-capped, or some mountain valley in Kashmir in the spring, covered with new flowers, and with a brook bubbling and gurgling through it. We make and preserve the pictures of our choice, and so I have chosen this mountain background rather than the more normal picture of a hot, sub-tropical country. Both pictures would be correct, for India stretches from the tropics right up to the temperate regions, from near the equator to the cold heart of Asia.

5. THE VITALITY AND CONTINUITY OF INDIAN CULTURE-PATTERN.

The Indus Valley civilization, of which impressive remains have been discovered at Mohenjo-daro in Sind and at Harappa in the Western Punjab, is the earliest picture that we have of India's past. These excavations have revolutionized the conception of ancient history.

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Between this Indus Valley civilization and today in India there are many gaps and periods about which we know little. The links joining one period to another are not always evident and a very great deal has of course happened and innumerable changes have taken place. But there is always an underlying sense of continuity, of an unbroken chain which joins modern India to the far distant period of six or seven thousand years ago when the Indus Valley civilization probably began. It is surprising how much there is in Mohenjo-daro and Harappa which reminds one of persisting traditions and habits, popular ritual, craftsmanship, even some fashions in dress. Much of this influenced western Asia.

It is interesting to note that at this dawn of India's story, she does not appear as a puling infant, but already grown up in many ways. She is not oblivious of life's ways, lost in dreams of a vague and unrealizable supernatural world, but has made considerable technical progress in the arts and amenities of life, creating not only things of beauty, but also the utilitarian and more typical emblems of modern civilization—good baths and drainage systems.

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Thus in these very early days we find the beginnings of the civilization and culture which were to flower so abundantly and richly in subsequent ages, and which have continued in spite of many changes, to our own day. The basic ideals, the governing concepts are taking shape, and literature and philosophy, art and drama and all other activities of life were conditioned by these ideals and world-view. Also we see the seeds of that exclusiveness and touch-me-notism which were to grow and grow till they became rigid, octopus-like, with their grip on everything—the caste system of recent times. Fashioned for a particular day, intended to stabilize the then organisation of society and give it strength and equilibrium, it developed into a prison for that social order and for the mind of man. Security was purchased in the long run at the cost of ultimate progress.

Yet it is a very long run and, even within that framework, the vital original impetus for advancement in all direction was so great that it spread out all over India and over the eastern seas, and its stability was such that it survived repeated shock and invasion. Professor Macdonell in his History of Sanskrit Literature tells us the 'the importance of Indian Literature as a whole consists in its originality. When the Greeks towards the end of the fourth century B.C. invaded the north-west, the Indians had already worked out a national culture of their own, unaffected by foreign influences. And in spite of successive waves of invasion and conquest by Persians, Greeks Scythians, Muhammadans, the national development of life and literature of the Indo-Aryan race remained practically unchecked and unmodified from without down to the era of British occupa-

tion. No other branch of the Indo-European stock has experienced an isolated evolution like this. No other country except China can trace back its language and literature, its religious beliefs and rites, its dramatic and social customs through an uninterrupted development of more than three thousand years'.

Still India was not isolated and throughout this long period of history she had continuous and living contacts with Iranians and Greeks and Chinese and Central Asians and others. If her basic culture survived these contacts, there must have been something in that culture itself which gave it the dynamic strength to do so, some inner vitality and understanding of life. For this three or four thousand years of cultural growth and continuity is remarkable. Max Muller, the famous scholar and Orientalist, emphasizes this: 'There is, in fact, an unbroken continuity between the most modern and the most ancient phases of Hindu thought, extending over more than three thousand years'. Carried away by his enthusiasm, he said (in his lectures delivered before the University of Cambridge, England, in 1882): 'If we were to look over the whole world to find out the country most richly endowed with all the wealth, power and beauty that nature can bestow—in some parts a very paradise on earth—I should point to India. If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered over the greatest problems of life, and has found solution of some of them which well deserves the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant—I should point to India. And if I were to ask myself from what literature, we here in Europe, we who have been nurtured almost exclusively on the thoughts of Greeks and Romans, and of one Semitic race, the Jewish, may draw the corrective which is most wanted in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal, in fact more truly human a life, not for this life only, but a transfigured and eternal life—again I should point to India.'

Nearly half a century later Romain Rolland wrote in the same strain:—'If there is one place in the face of the earth where all the dreams of living men have found a home from the very earliest days when man began the dream of existence, it is India.'

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There are repeatedly periods of decay and disruption in the life of every civilization and there had been such periods in Indian history previously. But India had survived them and rejuvenated herself afresh sometime retiring into her shell for a while and emerging again with fresh vigour. There always remained a dynamic core which could renew itself with fresh contact and develop again, something different from the past and yet intimately connected with it. Had that capacity for adaptation, that flexibility of mind which had saved India so often in the past left her now? Had her fixed beliefs and the growing rigidity of her social structure made her mind also rigid? For if life ceases to grow and evolve, the evolution of thought also ceases. India had all along been a curious combination of conservatism in practice though it did so in its own way without irreverence for the past. *'Mais si leur grace suffisant les mit anciens, leur intelligence y voyait des idees nouvelles. L'Inde s'est transformee a son insu.'* But when thought lost its explosiveness and creative power and became the tame attendant on an outgrown and meaningless practice, mumbling old phrases and fearful of everything new, then life became stagnant and tied and constrained in a prison of its own making.

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We have been an exclusive people, proud of our past, of our heritage and trying to build walls and barriers to preserve this. Yet in spite of our race-consciousness and the growing rigidity of caste, we have like others who take such pride in the purity of their racial stock, developed into a strange mixture of races—Aryan, Dravidian, Turanian, Semitic and Mongolian. The Aryans came here in repeated waves and mixed with the Dravidians: they were followed in the course of thousand of years by successive waves of other migratory peoples and tribes: the Medians, Iranians, Greeks, Bactrians, Parthians, Shakas or Scythians, Kushans or the Yueh Chih, Turkis, Turco-Mongols, and others who came in large or

small groups and found a home in India. 'Fierce and warlike tribes,' says Dodwell in his 'India': 'again and again, invaded its (India's) northern plains, overthrew its princes, captured and laid waste its cities, set up new States and built new capitals of their own and then vanished into the great tide of humanity, leaving to their descendants nothing but a swiftly diluted strain of alien blood and a few shreds of alien custom that were soon transformed into something cognate with their over-mastering surroundings.'

To what were these overmastering surroundings due? Partly to the influence of geography and climate, to the very air of India. But much more so surely to some powerful impluse, some tremendous urge, or idea of the significance of life, that was impressed upon the subconscious mind of India when she was fresh and young at the very dawn of her history. That impress was strong enough to persist and affect all those who came into contact with her, and thus to absorb them into her fold howsoever they differed. Was this impluse, this idea, the vital spark that lighted up the civilization that grew up in this country and, in varying degrees, continued to influence its people through historical ages?

Yunan-o-misr-o-roma Sab mit gai jahan se
Ablak magar hai baqi Nam-o-nishan hamara





TO WHOM SHALL WE MAKE OUR OFFERINGS ?
Artist—Mr. Bireswar Sen

By courtesy of Mr. K. N. Chatterjee



CHAPTER IV

THE MIND AND FACE OF INDIA

1. Integrated Life : the Central idea

(Sri G. C. Sondhi)

IN giving a picture of ancient India we are not attempting to deal with its long history, divided by writers into various periods. With new discoveries of historical material, the antiquity of India goes further and further back and confounds all previous notions of man's civilised existence. Mohen-je-daro has revealed a civilisation that is 7,000 years old; and it is beleived now that there are older cities and civilisations under Mohen-je-daro. Most people in Europe a century ago beleived that man arrived in this earth 6,000 years back.!

It is not possible for us to go into the disputed question when and wherefrom the Aryans came or if they came, from outside at all. Nor can we give any sequence and chronology of the great eras, civilisations, Empires and dynasties. The great achievements of India, at various times, in philosophy and literature, drama and poetry, painting and sculpture, architecture and music, medicine and mathematics must be studied elsewhere. The highly developed science and art of social existence, the regulated and sophisticated society in the family, the villages, towns and courts, the provision of well-organised social administration, of democracy, justice, medical aid, education, labour guilds, regulated commerce and artcraft give the picture of a world that is a life time's study. And this study takes you beyond the shores of India. For there was a flourishing ship-building industry and maritime activity. The missionary and colonial enterprise had established a cultural and commercial Empire of India across the mountains to the North and beyond the seas in the East, South and West.

What we are attempting is to try and go into the past of India that lives in the present, vital and pervasive and gives India its mind and face, through the ages, to our day. This study is even more impossible, and when carried briefly, has to be scrappy and partial, especially as it consists of extracts from larger text, taken mostly from a modern-minded Indian, who is essentially pre-occupied with the problems and struggle in our times.

If we were to give way to the temptation to simplify what is a deeply complex entity and define the most characteristic feature of India's mind and manifestation, we might call it a genius for and achievement of a multi-sided synthesis, the integration of life in its various aspects, or as the sages would put it, "oneness with the whole", and the harmonious system that came out of it.

In its dynamic aspect this is the quality of a constant quest, the urge to search the Truth.

This, perhaps, is the secret of the vitality of India. This would also explain its unity in diversity. The outer world is the manifestation of an all-pervading inner spirit. The sublimity and beauty of nature, and the material civilisation is thus linked with an inner life. High level building of a civilisation is correlated with ascetic detachment. Freedom of the individual personality and its full development, is harmonised with the pursuit of the social objectives; an integrated balance between the individual and the collective group, in an ever widening circle, till it merges into the world and the whole universe, is to be the aim. Existence and progress of the variously developed and situated persons and groups, have to go on, in an, order of law or *Dharma*.

The goal of life is an everlasting quest for truth, a 'scientific spirit' or 'permanent-revolution' urge which is only one aspect of and is a component part of another synthesis-that of Truth with Life and Joy.

This urge for knowledge, life and ecstacy is the keynote of the primeval Indian mind as revealed in the Rigveda. One form that it takes is the intense love of Nature, the 'worship' of the splendours of stars and suns, dawn and night, rain and storm, and later-day deification of mighty mountains, rivers and forests. The love of the forest (Tagore has written on "The forest civilisation") and outdoor life and the wanderlust is an heritage from this dawn of Indian life. Also this life, close to nature, gives an ideal of simple living with thoughts engaged on the loftiest plane—the meaning and mystery of life, and gives the scale of values which prevails in India.

The social structure based on ancient ideas, no doubt often corrupted and decadent, is essentially logical: the family, and tribe, and groups on a co-operative basis, decentralised functions of Government and industry, the exalted position of the intellectuals, the elders, the selfless social workers, teachers and philosophers, the honoured place of women, a numerous-faced correlation and integration in the "law," that was set for the society from time to time.

In its exalted periods, this perennial fountainhead gave birth to intellectual and artistic attainment unsurpassed in human history. Also this high level of culture at the top was translated into various popular forms and widely diffused. It resolved the discordant elements in new thought and new cultures and vitalised the obselete elements, to cope with life. For *Dharma* was the way of life. It formed the basis of a stable and progressive social and economic order. At this high level, the ancient Indian set of ideas has a bearing on modern situations and problems, facing not only the Indians but Mankind, problems that have come up and continue to arise, out of our own periods of decadence and the evolving world civilisation.

2. RESERVOIR OF INDIAN THOUGHT AND CULTURE:

The Vedas

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The *RIG VEDA*, the first of the *Vedas*, is probably the earliest book the humanity possesses. In it we can find the first outpourings of the human mind, the glow of poetry, the rapture at nature's loveliness and mystery. And in these early hymns there are, as Dr. Macnicol says, the beginnings of 'the brave adventures, made long ago and recorded here, of those who seek to discover the significance of our world and man's life with it...India here set out on a quest which she has never ceased to follow.'

Yet behind the *Rig Veda* itself lay ages of civilised existence and thought, during which the Indus Valley and the Mesopotamian and other civilisations had grown. It is appropriate therefore, that there should be this dedications in the *Rig Veda*: "To the Seers, our Ancestors, the first Path-Finders"!

These Vedic hymns have been described by Rabindra Nath Tagore as "a poetic testament of a people's collective reaction to the wonder

and awe of existence. A people of vigorous and unsophisticated imagination awakened at the very dawn of civilisation to a sense of the inexhaustible mystery that is implicit in life. It was a simple faith of theirs that attributed divinity to every element of and force of Nature, but it was a brave and joyous one, in which the sense of mystery only gave enchantment to life, without weighing it down with bafflement —the faith of a race unburdened with intellectual brooding on the conflicting diversity of the objective universe, though now and again illuminated by intuitive experience as : 'Truth is one : (though) the wise call it by various name's !' (Nehru)

Upanishads

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The re-discovery by Europe, during the past century and a half, of Indian philosophy created a powerful impression on European philosophers and thinkers. Schopenhauer, the pessimist, is often quoted in this connection, 'From every sentence (of the Upanishads) deep, original and sublime thoughts arise, and the whole is perveded by a high and holy and earnest spirit..... In the whole world there is no study..... so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads..... (They) are products of the highest wisdom It is destined sooner or later to become the faith of the people'. And again : 'The study of the Upanishads has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death'. Writing on this, Max Muller says : 'Schopenhauer was the last man to write at random, or to allow himself to go into ecstasies over so-called mystic inarticulate thought. And I am neither afraid nor ashamed to say that I share his enthusiasm for the Vedanta, and feel indebted to it for much that has been helpful to me in my passage through life.' In another place Max Muller says : 'The Upanishads are...the sources of...the *Vedanta* philosophy, a system in which human speculation seems to me to have reached its very acme.' 'I spend my happiest hours in reading *Vedantic* books. They are to me like the light of the morning, like the pure air of the mountains so simple, so true if once understood.'

But perhaps the most eloquent tribute to the Upanishads and to the later book, the Bhagavad Gita, was paid by AE(G.W. Russell the Irish poet: 'Goethe, Wordsworth, Emerson and Thoreau among moderns have something of this vitality and wisdom, but we can find all they have said and much more in the grand sacred books of the East. The Bhagavadgita and the Upanishads contain such godlike fullness of wisdom on all thing that I feel the authors must have looked with calm remembrance back through a thousand passionate lives, full of feverish strife for and with shadows, ere they could have written with such certainty of things which the soul feels to be sure.' (Nehru)

Bhagavad Gita

The *Bhagavad Gita*...'the most beautiful, perhaps the only philosophical song existing in any known tongue'... is a poem of crisis, of political and social crisis and, even more so, of crisis in the spirit of man.

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The Gita deals essentially with the spiritual back-ground of human existence and it is in this context that the practical problems of every day life appear. It is a call to action to meet the obligations and duties of life, but always keeping in view that spiritual background and the larger purpose of the universe. Inaction is condemned and action and life have to be in accordance with the highest ideals of the age, for these ideals themselves may vary from age to age, the *YUGADHARMA*, the ideal of the particular age, has always to be kept in view.

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The message of Gita is not sectarian or addressed to any particular school of thought. It is universal in its approach for every one, Brahmin or out-caste. 'All paths lead to Me', it says. It is because of this universality that it has found favour with all classes and schools. There is something in it which seem to be capable of being constantly renewed and not to become out of date with the passing time—an inner quality of earnest enquiry and search, of contemplation and action, of balance and equilibrium inspite of conflict and

contradiction. There is a poise in it and unity in the midst of disparity, and its tempet is one of supremacy over changing environment, not by seeking escape from it but by fitting with it. Indian humanity went repeatedly through the process of change and development and decay; experience succeeded experience, thought followed thought, but it always found something living in the *Gita*, something that fitted into the developing thought and had a freshness and applicability to the spiritual problems that afflict the mind.

(Nehru.)

The Epics

'The two great epics of ancient India—The Ramayana and the Mahabharata probably took shape in the course of several hundread years and even subsequently additions were made to them. They deal with the early days of the Indo-Aryan, their conquests and civil wars when they were expanding and consolidating themselves, but they were composed and compiled later. I do not know of any book anywhere which has exercised such a continous and pervasive influence on the mass mind as these two. Dating back to the remote antiquity, they are still a living force in the life of the Indian people. Not in the original Sanskrit, except for a few intellectuals, but in translations and adaptations and in those innumerable ways in which tradition and legend spread and become a part of texture of a people's life.

They represent the typical Indian method of catering all together for various degrees of cultural development, from the highest intellectual to the simple unread and untaught villager. They make us understand somewhat the secret of the old Indians, in holding together a variegated society, divided up in many ways, and graded in castes, in harmonizing their discords, and giving them a common background of heroic tradition and ethical living. Deliberately they tried to build up a unity of outlook among the people, which was to survive and overshadow all diversity.

Michelet, the French historian, writing in 1864, with special reference to the *Ramayana*, says: 'Whoever has done or willed too much let him drink from this deep cup a long draught of life and youth.....Everything is narrow in the West—Greece is small and I stifle: Judaea is dry and I pant. Let me look towards lofty Asia, and the profound East for a little while. There lies my great poem, as vast as the Indian Ocean, blessed, filled with the sun, the book of divine harmony wherein is no dissonance. A serene peace reigns there, and in the midst of conflict an infinite sweetness, a boundless fraternity, which spreads over all living things, an ocean (without bottom or bound) of love, of pity, of clemency.'

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Sister Nivedita (Margaret Noble), writing about the Mahabharata, has pointed out: 'The foreign reader..... is at once struck by two features: in the first place its unity in complexity; and, in the second, its constant efforts to impress on its hearts the idea of a single centralised India, with heroic tradition of her own as formative and uniting impulse.' (*Nehru*)

Indian Idea of Religion or Dharma

'The central idea of old Indian civilisation, or Indo-Aryan culture, was that of *Dharma*, which was something much more than religion or creed. It was a conception of obligations, or the discharge of one's duties to oneself and to others. This dharma itself was part of *Rita*, the fundamental moral law governing the functioning of the universe and all it contained. If there was such an order then man was supposed to fit in it and he should function in such a way as to remain in harmony with it. If man did his duty and was ethically right in his action the right consequences would inevitably follow. Rights as such were not emphasised. That, to some extent was the old outlook everywhere. It stands out in marked contrast with the modern assertion of rights, rights of individulas, of groups, of nations.

'In India, says Havell, religion is hardly a dogma, but a working hypothesis of human conduct, adapted to different stages of spiritual development and different conditions of life.' A dogma might continue to be believed in, isolated from life, but a working hypothesis of human conduct must work and conform to life or it obstructs life. The very *raison d'etre* of such hypothesis is its workableness, its conformity to life and its capacity to adapt itself to changing conditions. (Nehru)

Ashoka's Empire of Dharma

What Ashoka felt and how he acted are known to us in his own words in the numerous edicts he issued, carved in rock and metal. Those edicts, spread out all over India, are still with us, and they conveyed his messages not only to his people but to posterity. In one of the edicts it is said that :

'Kalinga was conquered by His Sacred and Gracious Majesty when he had been consecrated eight years. One hundred and fifty thousand persons were thence carried away as captive, one hundred thousand were there slain, and many times that number died.

'Directly after the annexation of the *Kalingas* began His Sacred Majesty's zealous protection of the Law of Piety, his love of that law, and his inculcation of that law (*Dharma*). Thus arose His Sacred Majesty's remorse for having conquered the *Kalingas*, because the conquest of a country previously unconquered involves the slaughter, death and carrying away captive of the people. That is a matter of profound sorrow and regret to His Sacred Majesty.'

'No longer' goes on the edict, 'would Ashoka tolerate any more killing or taking into captivity, not even of a hundredth or a thousandth part of the number killed and made captive in Kalinga. 'True conquest consists of the conquest of men's hearts by the Law of Duty or Piety', and, adds Ashoka, 'such real victories had already been won by him, not only in his own dominions, but in distant kingdoms'. Moreover the edict further says:

'Moreover, should any one do him wrong, that too must be borne with by his Sacred Majesty, so far as it can possibly be borne with. Even upon the forest folk in his dominions His Sacred Mejesty looks kindly and he seeks to make them think aright, for, if he did not, repentance would come upon His Sacred Majesty. For Sacred Majesty desires that all animate beings should have security, self-control, peace of mind, and joyousness'.

This astonishing ruler, beloved still in India and in many other parts of Asia, devoted himself to the spread of Buddha's teaching, of righteousness and good will, and to public works for the good of the people. He was no passive spectator of events, lost in contemplation and self-improvement. He laboured hard at public business and declared that he was always ready for it: 'At all times and at all places, whether I am dining or in the ladies' apartments in my bedroom or in my closet, in my carriage or in my palace gardens, the official reporters should keep me informed of the people's business.....At any hour and at any place, work I must for the commonweal.'

His messengers and ambassadors went to Syria, Egypt, Macedonia, Cyrene and Epirus, conveying his greeting and Buddha's meseage. They went to Central Asia also and to Burma, and Siam, and he sent his own son and daughter, Mahendra and Sanghamitra to Ceylon in the south. Everywhere an appeal was made to the mind and the heart; there was no force or compulsion. Ardent Buddhist as he was, he showed respect and consideration for all other faiths. He proclaimed in an edict:

'All sects deserve reverence for one reason or another. By thus acting a man exalts his own sect and at the same time does service to the sects of other people.' (Nehru)

3. THE ACCEPTANCE AND NEGATIONS OF LIFE: A SYNTHESIS

There is, in the Upanishads, a continual emphasis on the fitness of the body and clarity

of the mind, on the discipline of both body and mind, before effective progress can be made. The acquisition of knowledge, or any achievement, requires restraint, self-suffering, self-sacrifice. This idea of some kind of penance, tapasya, is inherent in Indian thought, both among the thinkers at the top and the unread masses below. It is present to-day as it was present some thousands of years ago, and it is necessary to appreciate it in order to understand the psychology underlying the mass movements which have convulsed India under Gandhiji's leadership.

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Some people have thought that Indian thought and culture represent essentially the principle of life negation and not of life affirmation. Both principles, are I suppose, present in various degrees in all the old religions and cultures. But I should have thought that Indian culture, taken as a whole, never emphasised the negation of life, though some of its philosophies did so.

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Many western writers have encouraged the notion that Indians are other-worldly. I suppose that the poor and the unfortunate in every country become to some extent otherworldly, unless they become revolutionaries, for this world is evidently not meant for them. So also subject peoples.

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We find in India, as eleswhere, these two streams of thought and action—The acceptance of life and the abstention from it, developing side by side with the emphasis on the one or other varying in different periods. Yet the basic background of that culture was not of other-worldliness or of world worthlessness.

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In India we find during every period when her civilisation bloomed, as intense joy in life and nature, pleasure in the act of living, the development of art, music, culture and song, dancing, painting and the theatre and even a highly sophisticated enquiry into the sexual relation. It is inconceivable that a culture or view of life based on other worldliness or world worthlessness could have produced all these manifestations of vigorous and varied life. Indeed it should be obvious that any culture that was basically other-worldly could not have carried on for thousands of years.

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The confusion seems to have arisen from the fact that Indian thought was always laying stress on the ultimate purpose of life. It could never forget the transcendent element in its make-up. And so, while affirming life to the full, it refused to became a victim and a slave of life. Indulge in right action with all your strength and energy, it said, but keep above it, and do not worry much about the results of such action. Thus it taught detachment in life and action, not abstention from them. This idea of detachment runs through Indian thought and philosophy, as it does through most other philosophies. It is another way of saying that a right balance and equilibrium should be kept between the visible and invisible words, for if there is too much attachment to action in the visible world, the other world is forgotten and fades away, and that action itself becomes without ultimate purpose.

(Nehru)

Hermitages And Hermit Kings

The institution of hermitages in India was something unique Unlike the later Buddhistic Viharas and the mediaeval christian monastries, the inmates of the ashramas did not shut them off from the world, but lived in the seclusion of forests, often, with families, like other house-holders. These were sylvan retreats for study and meditation, receiving students as residential centres of education. The city dwellers, sometimes Kings and Queens, visited and lived in these hermitages, tempotarily, in search of peace and wisdom. The hermits and their familliers were often honoured guest in courts and palaces.

The hermitages impressed all life deeply. In Indian history and tradition there is a glorious line of Kings who became hermits, and the great Buddha was neither the first nor the last of this line. There are legends of mighty Kings who gave up their throne for the begging bowl, or went to live in forests. Also of Kings who lived an asetic life, amidst the splendour of

their courts or gave away their thrones to a teacher or to the Brahmins. This tradition was earlier than the 'Ramayana' and came down to the days of Chhatrapati Shivaji. (Sondhi)

Harsha-Festival

A very striking illustration of this was the seventy-five days festival of Harsha, in A. D. 644, held at the confluence of the Ganga and Jumna at Prayag (Allahabad), at which Hiuen Tsang was present. Harsha had held such a festival every five years for thirty years, "in accordance with the custom of his ancestors," to distribute among the ascetics, religious orders and the poor, *the accumulations of wealth of the preceding five years.* About half a million of people assembled, gifts were distributed on the first three days in the name of Buddha, the Sun, and Shiva; on the fourth day, to 10,000 Buddhist monks, who each received 100 gold coins, a pearl and a cotton garment; then for twenty days, gifts to Brahmanas, for ten days to 'heretics'; for a month to the poor, destitute and orphans. Harsha gave everything, except horses, elephants and army equipments, down to his personal jewels. And this was done every five years. The great festival is still held every twelfth year, but there is no King Harsha, and no distribution of gifts. Nor, if there were such a monarch, could the country support such quennial accumulations.

(Annie Besant)

4. CULTURE OF THE MASSES

It must be remembered that for the purpose of philosophy, India was not confined to a few philosophers or highbrows. Philosophy was an essential part of the religion of the masses; it percolated to them in some attenuated form and created that philosophic outlook which became nearly as common in India as in China. That philosophy was, for some, a deep and intricate attempt to know the causes and laws of all phenomena, the search for the ultimate purpose of life, and the attempt to find an organic unity in life's many contradictions.

Thus I saw the moving drama of the Indian people in the present, and could often trace the threads which bound their lives to the past, even while their eyes were turned towards the future. Everywhere I found a cultural background which had exerted a powerful influence on their lives. This background was a mixture of popular philosophy, tradition, history, myth and legend, and it was not possible to draw a line between any of these. Even the entirely uneducated and illiterate shared this background. The old epics of India, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata and other books, in popular translations and paraphrases, were widely known among the masses, and every incident and story and moral in them was engraved on the popular mind and gave a richness and content to it. Illiterate villagers would know hundreds of verses by heart and their conversation would be full of references to them or some story with a moral, enshrined in some old classic. Often I was surprised by some such literary turn given by a group of villagers to a simple talk about present-day affairs. If my mind was full of pictures from recorded history and more-or-less ascertained fact, I realized that even the illiterate peasant had a picture gallery in his mind, though this was largely drawn from myth and tradition and epic heroes and heroines, and only very little from history. Nevertheless it was vivid enough.

I looked at their faces and their figures and watched their movements. There was many a sensitive face and many a sturdy body, straight and clean-limbed: and among the women there was grace and suppleness and dignity and poise and, very often, a look that was full of melancholy. Usually the finer physical types were the upper castes, who were just a little better off in the economic sense. Sometimes, as I was passing along a country road or through a village, I would start with surprise on seeing a fine type of a man, or a beautiful woman who reminded me of some fresco of ancient times. And I wondered how the type endured and continued through ages, in spite of all the horror and misery that India had gone through. What could we not do with these people under better

1. Annie Besant : How India wrought for freedom.

conditions and with greater opportunities opening out to them?

There was poverty and the innumerable progeny of poverty everywhere, and the mark of this beast was on every forehead. Life had been crushed and distorted and made into a thing of evil, and many vices had flown from this distortion and continuous lack and ever-present insecurity. All this was not pleasant to see: yet that was the basic reality in India. There was far too much of the spirit of resignation and acceptance of things as they were. But there was also a mellowness and a gentleness, the cultural heritage of thousands of years, which no amount of misfortune had been able to rub off.

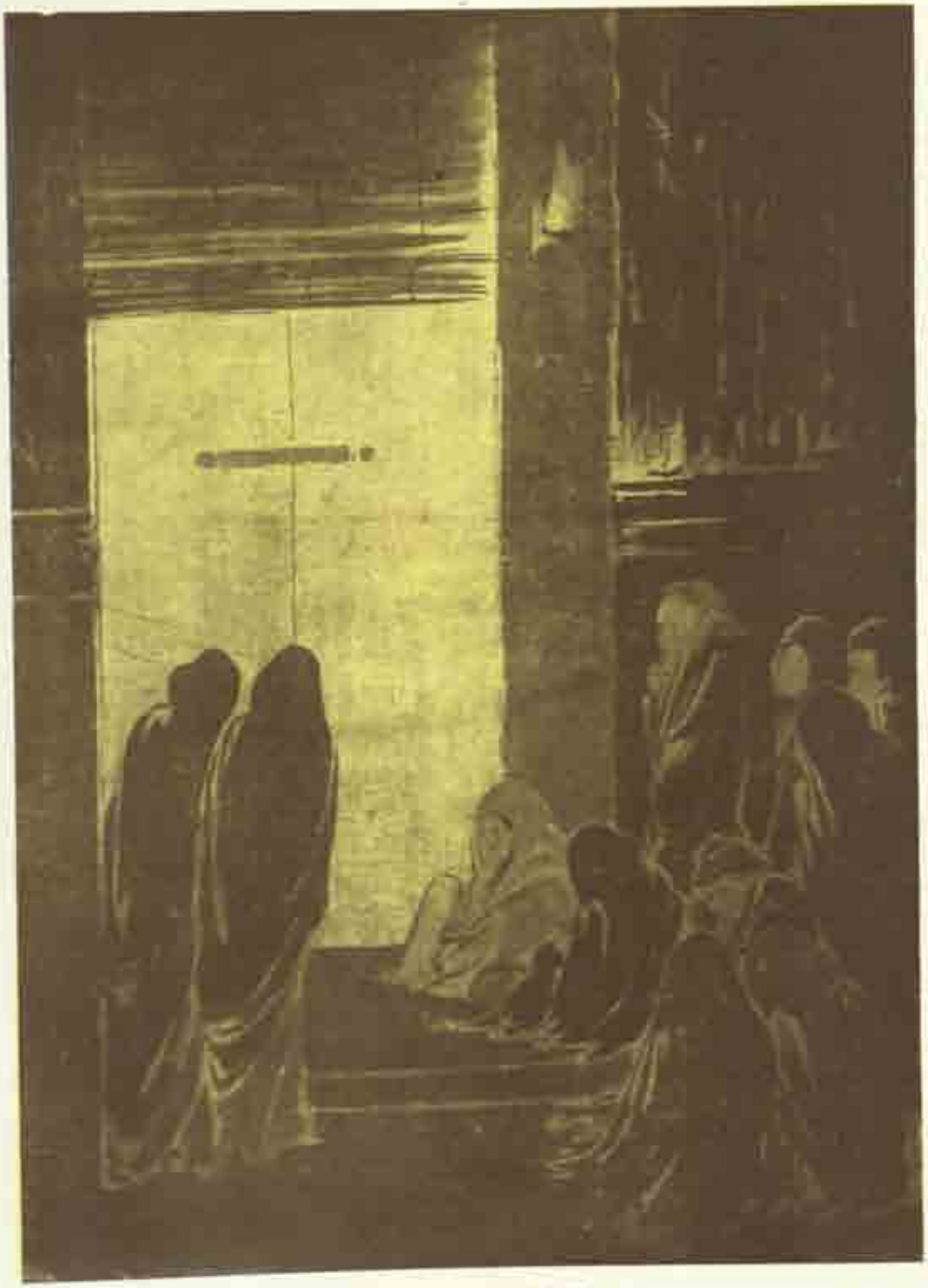
(Nehru)

5. THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF CASTE: THE JOINT FAMILY

'In India' says Havell, 'religion is hardly a dogma, but a working hypothesis of human conduct, adapted to different stages of spiritual development and different conditions of life'. In the ancient days when Indo-Aryan culture first took shape, religion had to provide for the needs of men who were as far removed from each other in civilization and intellectual and spiritual development as it is possible to conceive. There were primitive forest-dwellers, fetishists, totem-worshippers and the believers in every kind of superstition, and there were those who had attained highest flights of spiritual thought. In between, there was every shade and gradations of belief and practice. While the highest froms of thought were pursued by some, these were wholly beyond the reach of many. As social life grew, certain uniformities of belief spread, but, even so, many differences, cultural and temperamental, remained. The Indo-Aryan approach was to avoid the forcible suppression of any belief or the destruction of any claim. Each group was left free to work out its ideals along the plan of its mental development and understanding. Assimilation was attempted but there was no denial or suppression.

A similar and even more difficult problem had to be faced in social organisation. How to combine these utterly different groups in one social system, each group co-operating with the whole and yet retaining its own freedom to live its own life and develop itself. In a sense-though the comparison is far fetched-this may be compared to the numerous minority problems of today which afflict so many countries and are still far from solution. The United States of America solve their minority problems, more or less, by trying to make every citizen a 100% American. They make everyone conform to a certain type. Other countries, with a longer and more complicated past, are not so favourably situated. Even Canada has its strong race, religion and language-consicous French group. In Europe the barriers are higher and deeper. And yet all this applies to Europeans, or those who have spread from Europe: people who have a certain common background and similarity of culture. Where non-Europeans come in, they do not fit this pattern. In the United States, Negroes, though they may be hundred per cent American, are a race apart, deprived of many opportunities and priveleges, which others have as a matter of course. There are innumerable worse examples elsewhere. Only Soviet Russia is said to have solved its problem of nationalities and minorities by creating what is called a multi-national State.

If these difficulties and problems pursue us even to-day, with all our knowledge and progress, how much harder they must have been in the ancient days when the Indo-Aryans were evolving their civilization and social structure in a land full of variety and different types of human beings. The normal way to deal with these problems then and later was to exterminate or enslave the conquered populations. This way was not followed in India but it is clear that every precaution was taken to perpetuate the superior position of the upper groups. Having ensured superiority, a kind of multiple-community State was built up in which, within certain limits and subject to some general rules, freedom was given to each group to follow its avocation and live its own life in accordance with its own customs or desires. The only real restriction was that it must not interfere



AT THE TEMPLE DOOR
Artist—Gaganendranath Tagore

By courtesy of Mr. K. N. Chatterjee

or come into conflict with another group. This was a flexible and expanding system for new groups could always be formed either by new-comers or by dissident members of an old group, provided they were numerous enough to do so. Within each group there was equality and democracy and the elected leaders guided it and frequently consulted the entire group whenever any important questions arose.

These groups were almost always functional, each specializing in a particular trade or craft. They became thus some kind of trade unions or craft-guilds. There was a strong sense of solidarity within each, not only protected group but sheltered and helped an individual member who get into trouble or was in economic distress. The functions of each group or caste were related to the functions of other castes, and the idea was that if each group functioned successfully within its own framework, then society as a whole worked harmoniously. Over and above this, a strong and fairly successful attempt was made to create a common national bond which would hold all these groups together-the sense of common culture, common tradition, common heroes and saints, and a common land to the four corners of which people went on pilgrimage. This national bond was of course very different from present-day nationalism; it was weak politically, but socially and culturally it was strong. Because of its political lack of cohesiveness, it facilitated foreign conquest; because of its social strength it made recovery easy as well as assimilation of new elements. It had so many heads that they could not be cut off and they survived conquest and disaster.

Thus caste was a group system based on services and functions. It was meant to be an all-inclusive order without any common dogma and allowing the fullest latitude to each group. Within wide fold there was monogamy, polygamy and celibacy; they were tolerated. Life was to be maintained at all levels. No minority need submit to a majority, for it could always form a seperate autonomous group, the only test being: is it a distinctive group large enough to function as such? Between two groups there could be any amount of variation of race, religion, colour, culture and intellectual development.

An individual was only considered as a member of a group; he could do anything he liked so long as he did not interfere with the functioning of the group. He had no right to upset that functioning, but if he was strong enough and could gather enough supporters, it was open to him to form another group. If he could not fit in with any group, that meant that he was out of joint so far as the social activities of the world were concerned. He could then become a sanyasi who had renounced caste, every group and the world of activity, and could wander about and do what he liked.

It must be remembered that while the Indian social tendency was to subordinate the individual to the claims of the group and society, religious thought and spiritual seeking have always emphasised the individual. Salvation and knowledge of the ultimate truth were open to all to the member of every caste, high or low. This salvation or enlightenment could not be a group affair: it was highly individualistic. In the search for this salvation also there were no inflexible dogmas and all doors were supposed to lead to it.

Though the group system was dominant in the organisation of society leading to caste, there has always been an individualistic tendency in India. A conflict between the two approaches is often in evidence. Partly that individualism was the result of the religious doctrine which laid emphasis on the individual. Social reformers who criticised or condemned the caste system were usually religious reformers and their main argument was that the divisions of the caste system came in the way of spiritual development and that in the individualism to which religion pointed. Buddhism was a breadaway from the groupcaste ideal towards some kind of individualism as well as universalism. But this individualism became associated with a withdrawal from normal social activities. It offered no effective alternative social structure to caste, and so caste continued then and later.

What were the main castes? If we leave out for a moment those who were considered outside the pale of caste, the untouchables, there were the *Brahmins*—the priests, teachers, intellectuals; *Kshatriyas* the or the rulers and warriors; the *Vaishyas* or merchants, traders, bankers, etc; and the *Shudras*, who were the agricultural caste and other workers. Probably the only closely knit and exclusive caste was that of the *Brahmins*. The *Kshatriyas* were frequently adding to their numbers both from foreign incoming elements and others in the country who rose to power and authority. The *Vaishyas* were chiefly traders and bankers and also engage in a number of other professions. The main occupations of the *Shudras* were cultivation and domestic service. There was always a continuous process of new castes being formed, as new occupations developed and four other reasons, and other castes were always trying to go up in the social scale. These processes have continued to our day. Some of the lower castes suddenly take to wearing the sacred thread which is supposed to be reserved for the upper castes. All this really made little difference as each caste continued to function in its own ambit and pursued its own trade or occupation. It was merely a question of prestige. Occasionally men of the lower classes, by sheer ability, attained to positions of power and authority in the State, but this was very exceptional.

The organization of society being, generally speaking, non-competetive and non-acquisitive, these divisions into castes did not make as much difference as they might otherwise have done. The *Brahmin* at the top, proud of his intellect and learning and respected by others, seldom had much in the way of worldly possessions. The merchant, prosperous and rich, had no very high standing in society as a whole.

The vast majority of the population consisted of the agriculturists. There was no landlord system, nor was there any peasant proprietorship. It is difficult to say who owned the land in law; there was nothing like the present doctrine of ownership. The cultivator had the right to till his land and only real question was as to the distribution of the produce of the land. The major share went to the cultivator, the King or the State took a share (usually one-sixth), and very functional group in the village, which served the people in any way, had its share the *Brahmin* priest and teacher, the merchant, the blacksmith, the carpenter, the cobbler, the potter, the builder, the barber, the scavenger, etc. Thus in a sense, every group from the State to the scavenger was a shareholder in the produce.

Who were the depressed classes and the untouchables? The 'depressed classes' is a new designation applying rather vaguely to a number of castes near the bottom of the scale. There is no hard and fast line to separate them from others. The untouchables are more definite. In North India only a very small number, engaged in scavenging or unclean work, are considered untouchable. *Fahsien* tells us that when he came, the persons who removed human faeces were untouchable. In Southern India the numbers are much larger. How they began and grew to such numbers, it is difficult to say. Probably those who were engaged in occupations considered unclean were so treated: later landless agricultural labour might have been added.

The idea of ceremonial purity has been extraordinarily strong among the Hindus. This has led to one good consequence and many bad ones. The good one is bodily cleanliness. A daily bath has always been an essential feature of a Hindu's life, including most of the depressed classes. It was from India that this habit spread to England and elsewhere. The average Hindu, and even the poorest peasant, takes some pride in his shining pots and pans. This sense of cleanliness is not scientific and the man who bathe twice a day will unhesitatingly drink water that is unclean and full of germs. Nor is it corporate, at any rate now. The individual will keep his own but fairly clean but throw all the rubbish in the village street in front of his neighbour's house. The village is usually very dirty and full of garbage heaps. It is also noticeable that cleanliness is not thought of as such but as a consequence of some religious sanction. When that religious

sanction goes, there is marked deterioration in the standards of cleanliness.

The evil consequence of ceremonial purity was a growth of exclusiveness, touch-me-notism, and of not eating and drinking with people of other castes. This grew to fantastic lengths unknown in any other part of the world. It led also to certain classes being considered untouchable because they had the misfortune to do some kinds of essential work which were considered unclean. The practice of normally feeding with one's own caste people spread to all castes. It become a sign of social status and the lower castes stuck to it even more rigidly then some of the higher ones. This practice is breaking up now among the higher castes but it still continues among these lower castes, including the depressed classes.

If inter-dining was taboo, much more so was intermarriage between castes. Some mixed marriages inevitably took place but on the whole it is extraordinary how each caste kept to itself and propagated its own kind. The continuation of racial identity through long ages is an illusion and yet the caste system in India has to some extent managed to preserve distinctive types, especially among the higher castes.

Some groupes at the bottom of the scale are sometimes referred to as outside groups. As a matter of fact no group, not even the untouchables, are outside the framework of the caste system. The depressed classes and the untouchables from their own castes and have their *panchayats* or caste councils for settling their own affairs. But many of these have been made to suffer cruelly by excluding them from the common life of the village.

The autonomous village community and the caste system were thus two of the special features of the old Indian social structure. The third was the joint family where all the members were joint sharers in the common property and inheritance went by survivorship, the father or some other elder was the head but he functioned as a manager and not as the old Roman *pater-familias*. A division of property was permitted under certain circumstances and if the parties concerned so desired. The joint property was supposed to provide for the needs of all the members of the family, workers or nonworkers. Inevitably this meant a guaranteed minimum for all of them, rather than high rewards for some. It was a kind of insurance for all including even the subnormal and the physically or mentally deficient. Thus while there was security for all, there was a certain levelling down of the standard of service demanded as well as of the recompense given. Emphasis was not laid on personal advantage or ambition but on the group, that is the family's advantage. The fact of growing up and living in a large family minimized the egocentric attitude of the child and tended to develop an aptitude for socialization.

All this is the very opposite of what happens in the highly individualistic civilization of the West and more especially of America, where personal ambition is encouraged and personal advantage is almost the universal aim, and all the plums go to the bright and pushing, and the weak timid or second-rate go to the wall. The joint family system is rapidly breaking up in India and individualistic attitudes are developing, leading not only to far-reaching changes in the economic background of life but also to new problems of behaviour.

All the three pillars of the Indian social structure were thus based on the group and not on the individual. The aim was social security, stability and continuance of the group, that is of society. Progress was not the aim and progress therefore had to suffer. Within each group, whether this was the village community, the particular caste, or the large joint family, there was a communal life shared together, a sense of equality and democratic methods. Even now caste *panchayats* function democratically. It surprised me at one time to see the eagerness of a villager, sometimes illiterate, to serve on elected committees, for political or other purposes. He soon got into the way of it and was a helpful member whenever any question relating to his life came up, and was not easily subdued. But there was an

unfortunate tendency for small groups to split up and quarrel among themselves.

The democratic way was not only wellknown but was a common method of functioning in social life in local government, trade guilds, religious assemblies, etc Caste, with all its evils, kept up the democratic habit in each group. There used to be elaborate rules of procedure, election and debate. The Marquis of Zetland has referred to some of these in writing about the early Buddhist assemblies: "And it may come as a surprise to many to learn that in the Assemblies of the Buddhists in India two thousand or more years ago are to be found the rudiments of our own parliamentary practice of the present day. The dignity of the Assembly was preserved by the appointment of a special officer—the embryo of 'Mr. Speaker' in the House of Commons. A second officer was appointed whose duty it was to see that when necessary a quorum was secured—the prototype of the Parliamentary Chief Whip in our own system. A member initiating business did so in the form of a motion which was then open to discussion. In some cases this was done once only, in others three times, thus anticipating the practice of Parliament in requiring that a Bill be read a third time before it becomes law. If discussion disclosed a difference of opinion the matter was decided by the vote of the majority, the voting being by ballot."

The old Indian social structure had thus some virtues and indeed it could not have lasted so long without them. Behind it lay the philosophic ideal of Indian culture—the integration of man and the stress on goodness, beauty and truth rather than acquisitiveness. An attempt was made to prevent the joining together and concentration of honour, power and wealth. The duties of the individual and the group was emphasized, not their rights. The *Smritis* (Hindu religious books) give lists of *dharmas*, functions and duties of various castes but none of them contains an inventory of rights. Self-sufficiency was aimed at in the group, especially in the village and in a different sense, in the caste. It was a closed system, allowing a certain adaptability, change, and freedom within its outer framework, but inevitably growing more and more exclusive and rigid. Progressively, it lost its power to expand and tap new sources of talent. Powerful vested interests prevented any radical change and kept education from spreading to other classes. The old superstitions, known to be such by many among the upper classes, were preserved and new ones were added to them. Not only the national economy but thought itself became stationary, traditional, rigid, unexpansive and unprogressive.

The conception and practice of caste embodied the aristocratic ideal and was obviously opposed to democratic conceptions. It had its strong sense of *noblesse oblige*, provided people kept to their hereditary stations and did not challenge the established order. India's success and achievements were on the whole confined to the upper classes; those lower down in the scale had very few chances and their opportunities were strictly limited. These upper classes were not small limited groups but large in numbers and there was a diffusion of power, authority and influence. Hence they carried on successfully for a very long period. But the ultimate weakness and failing of the caste system and the Indian social structure were that they degraded a mass of human beings and gave them no opportunities to get out of that—conditon educationally, culturally or economically. That degradation brought deterioration all along the line including in its scope even the upper classes. It led to that petrifaction which became a dominant feature of India's economy and life. The contrasts between this social structure and those existing elsewhere in the past were not great, but with the changes that have taken place all over the world during the past few generations they have become far more pronounced. In the context of society today, the caste system and much that goes with it are wholly incompatible, reactionary, restrictive, and barriers to progress. There can be no equality in status and opportunity within its framework nor can there be political democracy and much less economic democracy.

Between these two conceptions conflict is inherent and only one of them can survive,

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6. BALANCE OF INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE TRENDS IN ANCIENT INDIA

The old Indian social stucture, which has so powerfully influenced our people..... Was based on three concepts : the autonomous village community, caste and the joint family. In all these three it is the group that counts : the individual has a secondary place.

(*Nehru*)

.....

The intense individualism of the Indo-Aryans..... lead to the production of very superior types, not in one particular limited period of history, but again and again, age after age. It gave a certain idealistic and ethical background to the whole culture, which persisted and still persists, though it may not influence practice much. With the help of this background and by sheer force of example at the top, they held together the social fabric and repeatedly rehabilitated it when it threatened to go to pieces. They produced an astonishing flowering of civilisation and culture which though largely confined to the upper circles, inevitably spread to some extent to the masses.

(*Nehru*)

The Need of a Life Instilled with Unity

Mankind may some day look at our age as that in which the most difficult of human arts — and the last to be adumbrated by man—emerged from the cavern age. All that lies behind us, as well as all that lies under our eyes, in the art of government is barbarous : even, if I may venture this paradoxical statement, the idea itself of the art of government which may after all be but a cave-dwelling anticipation of something as yet but half guessed amongst men : the balance of collective and individual trends in human life.

The taboos of primitive races and the tyrannous practices of their chiefs: the glory of the old Asiatic potentates: the purple splendour and bloody horror of the Roman emperors: the blessing hand and the grabbing hand of the Popes of Rome : the knightly and the infamous wars of the Middle Ages: the daring and the sordid adventures of the *Conquistadores* and of empire builders: the gradual evolution of law from command to consent and from consent to common sense: the civil wars of industry with their rough and ready methods of strike and lockout by which the whole community is paralysed to solve a small conflict in a corner of it: the rise and the first—though not the last—fall of League of Nations: the rise and the first—though not the last—fall of Marxism: the appearance of Fascism-Nazism as the mechanization of tyranny—all this seen from the future, all these struggles and many more which the nets of mental attention have left uncaught, are but passing forms, imposed by the circumstances of time and place, of the one and permanent problem of human communities—the adjustment of collective and individual trends.

.....

All history may be read as the struggle for such balance. Civil wars and revolutions under the banner of liberty assert the rhythm and the finality of man: reactions and oppressions under the banner of dictatorship assert here and there the finality and the rhythm of the nation. International wars assert the rhythm and the finality of nations over other nations. The never interrupted struggle towards the higher forms of peace and towards either spiritual or material unity, or both, assert the rhythm and the finality of mankind.

.....

The balance between the three forms of human life-individual, national and universal—so difficult of adjustment in our day: but the problem is in itself permanent in the history of human societies. As a makeshift, when threatened by a lack of balance which may endanger one or other

of the finalities which constitute them, societies evolve system of force. Thus, by a curious aberration men are led to mistake strong for healthy societies, or perhaps better, coercive and authoritative for strong societies. Yet it is obvious that in a society progress is always accompanied by a gradual reduction of force or, in other words, that a society evolves towards perfection as the role of coercion in its midst becomes less and less important for its healthy working.

Force in a society is therefore like a surgical contrivance in a human body, an artificial prop to do for a time what life is, for that time, unable to do.

It is obvious that the problem can only be solved on the basis of balance. Defined as is the adjustment of the three finalities—individual, national and universal, neither Liberalism nor Statism (whether Communist, or Fascist, it is all one) nor universalism can in themselves meet the needs of the case. Mankind will not emerge from the present barbarous stage in our history until enough men in enough countries have realized that Liberalism, Communism-Fascism and universalism must all emerge into a higher conception rooted on the sense of the organic unity of the whole.

In its essence, therefore, the problem of our day is less in the doing than in the being. We need not act differently: we must become different. Such is the evolution we must set going if we are to change the world as change it we must, or else it die, and we with it.

Two conditions must be fulfilled towards this aim—that the trend of the evolution become clear and conscious in the leading men of the universal society: and that the sense of it be conveyed to vast fields of human life. The first is a slow process, predominantly, but by no means solely, intellectual. We are witnessing it under our own eyes all over the civilized world, including, despite appearances the totalitarian countries. The second is more difficult, because the living sense of things can only be conveyed by life: a life instilled with unity is needed to convey the living sense of unity to others. Such a life is Gandhi's. And that is why the Mahatma is perhaps the most symbolic man of our day, for he is not so much a man of action or a man of thought as a man of life.

(Don Salvador De Madariaga in Mahatma Gandhi S. Radha Krishnan Pg 177.)

Individuo-Socialism in Ancient India

Mere reversion to agricultural life will not suffice. You have to revert much further back. And nations, as well as individuals, have to revert much further back. And nations, as well as individuals *have* to revert thus: but in the proper time: *after* having "tasted and tested all things, and held fast by the (relatively) good": after having equitably discharged their duties to the egoistic as well as altruistic instincts. Mahatma Gandhi has often equated Swa-raj, with Ram-raj, again without precise definition. But Ram-raj, if Valmiki is to be believed, was very far from being wholly agricultural. It was largely agricultural: but it was not all villages only: it was highly urban also. Valmiki's description of Rama's Ayodhya is almost as gorgeous, though quieter, as that of Ravana's Golden Lanka, which was predominantly 'Mechanical".

In the present condition of India, with her internal dissensions, the eyes of many of the educated younger generation are fixed on Russia and her Bolshevism or Socialism or Communism, "though they are frightened also by its periodical bloody purges." On the other hand, the eyes of older generation in (as well as out of) the Congress, despite deprecations of slave-mentality, are fixed on the Democratism, or whatever it be, of Britain or its Colonies, and of the U.S.A.: perhaps of the France also. No one in India seems overtly to be in favour of the 'ideology' of Nazism-Fascism. Yet, it seems, to some of us atleast, that if only all these 'isms' would shed their 'extremisms', and take in, instead, a little genuine Spiritual Religion and a few psychological principles, they would be at once shaking hand with each other,

or even running into each other's arms. All these "ideologies" and "isms" have great things to their credit; all have great crimes to their debit, too. It is only lop-sided extremisms that are making them glare at each other, spend all their respective peoples' vitality on "organizing" for war instead of "organizing for peace."

This dire jeopardy of Western Civilization, when its great sins against the weaker peoples are "coming home to roost" and its fate is hanging by a thread, this shou'd abate, if not dispel, our "Democratist" as well as "Socialist" leaders' fond faiths in the various "ideologies" of the West, which many of the most eminent scientists and thinkers of that West itself are condemning strongly: and should induce them to give serious attention and consideration to the principles of the ancient time-tested Social Structure. Some ask: If those principles were so good, why has India fallen? The answer is: Because the character of the custodians degenerated, the "sprit" changed, the "head" went wrong, the good principles were *not followed* any longer, were *neglected*, nay, were *replaced by evil ones*. The custodians of the "Law" in India lost, indeed, both self-denial and wisdom. Without a strong central core, a dauntless heart-and-brain, consisting of a band of *philanthropic, self-denying and wise* persons, no nation, no people, no civilization, can flourish. A nation, a people, which cannot evolve and maintain such a "heart-and-brain" must die prematurely of degeneration, or by violent "accident," destruction by war, or become enslaved and live by sufferance. This last fate has befallen India. But it has much vitality yet left, and the strong possibility of a new lease of life, provided the needed *vidya* can be added to Mahatma Gandhi's *tapas*.

Mahatma Gandhi, our greatest *moral* force, our greatest *tapas*-force to day, has only to add to that the *intellectual* force of what the ancient *vidya* teaches on the subject of *Social Organization*. He will then succeed in saving India, and will make her a shining example for the West to copy, instead of a reflection, and a pale distorted reflection too, of that West's own features.

(Bhagavan Das in Mahatma Gandhi: S. Radha Krishnan, Page 76-78)





CHAPTER V

LIFE AND WORK IN ANCIENT INDIA

(Nehru)

A great deal has been done by scholars and philosophers to trace the development of philosophic and metaphysical thought in the India of the past; much has also been done to fix the chronology of historic events and draw in broad outline political maps of those periods. But not much has so far been done to investigate the social and economic conditions of those days, how people lived, carried on their work, what they produced and how, and the way trade functioned. Greater attention is being paid to these vital questions now and some works by Indian scholars, and one by an American, have appeared. But a great deal remains to be done. The *Mahabharata* itself is a storehouse of sociological and other data and many other books will no doubt yield useful information. But they have to be critically examined from this particular point of view. One book of inestimable value is Kautilya's *Arthashastra* of the forth century B. C., which gives details of the political, social, economic and military organization of the Maurya Empire.

As earlier account, which definitely takes us back to the pre-Buddhist period in India, is contained in the collection of the *Jataka* tales. These *Jatakas* were given their present shape sometime after the Buddha. They are supposed to deal with the previous incarnations of the Buddha and have become an important part of Buddhist literature. But the stories are evidently much older and they deal with the pre-Buddhistic period and give us much valuable information about life in India in those days. Prof. Rhys Davids has described them as the oldest, most complete and most important collection of folklore extant. Many of the subsequent collections of animal and other stories which were written in India and found their way to western Asia and Europe can be traced to the *Jatakas*.

The *Jatakas* deal with the period when the final amalgamation of the two principal races of India, the Dravidians and the Aryans, was taking place. They reveal 'a multiform and chaotic society which resists more or less every attempt at classification and about which there can be no talk of an organization according to caste in that age.' The *Jatakas* may be said to represent the popular tradition as contrasted with the priestly or Brahminic tradition and the *Kshatriya* or ruling class tradition.

There are chronologies and genealogies of various kingdoms and their rulers. Kingship,

1. Discovery of India.

originally elective, becomes hereditary, according to the rule of primogeniture. Women are excluded from this succession, but there are exceptions. As in China, the ruler is held responsible for all misfortunes: if anything goes wrong the fault must lie with the king. There was a council of ministers and there are also references to some kind of State assembly. Nevertheless the king was an autocratic monarch though he had to function within established conventions. The high priest had an important position in court as an adviser and person in charge of religious ceremonies. There are references to popular revolts against unjust and tyrannical kings, who are sometimes put to death for their crimes.

Village assemblies enjoyed a measure of autonomy. The chief source of revenue was from the land. The land-tax was supposed to represent the king's share of the produce, and it was usually, but not always, paid in kind. Probably this tax was about one-sixth of the produce. It was predominantly an agricultural civilization and the basic unit was the self-governing village. The political and economic structure was built up from these village communities which were grouped in tens and hundreds. Horticulture, rearing of live stock, and dairy farming were practised on an extensive scale. Gardens and parks were common and fruit and flowers were valued. The list of flowers mentioned is a long one: among the favourite fruit were the mango, fig, grape, plantain and the date. There were evidently many shops of vegetable and fruit-sellers in the cities, as well as of florists. The flower-garland was then, as now, a favourite of the Indian people.

Hunting was a regular occupation chiefly for the food it provided. Flesh-eating was common and included poultry and fish: venison was highly esteemed. There were fisheries and slaughter-houses. The principal articles of diet were, however, rice, wheat, millet and corn. Sugar was extracted from sugarcane. Milk and its various products were then, as they are now, highly prized. There were liquor shops and liquor was apparently made from rice, fruit and sugarcane.

There was mining for metals and precious stones. Among the metals mentioned are: gold, silver, copper, iron, lead, tin and brass. Among the precious stones were diamonds, rubies, corals: also pearls. Gold, silver and copper coins are referred to. There were partnerships for trade and loans were advanced on interest.

Among the manufactured goods are silks, woollens and cotton textiles; rugs, blankets and carpets. Spinning, weaving and dyeing are flourishing and widespread industries. The metallurgical industry produces weapons of war. The building industry uses stone, wood and bricks. Carpenters make a variety of furniture, etc., including carts, chariots, ships, bedsteads, chairs, benches, chests, toys, etc. Cane-workers make mattresses, baskets, fans and sunshades. Potters function in every village. From flowers and sandalwood a number of perfumes, oils and 'beauty' products are made, including sandalwood powder. Various medicines and drugs are manufactured and dead bodies are sometimes embalmed.

Apart from the many kinds of artisans and craftsmen who are mentioned, various other professions are referred to: teachers, physicians and surgeons, merchants and traders, musicians, astrologers, greengrocers, actors, dancers, itinerant jugglers, acrobats, puppet-players, pedlars.

Domestic slavery appears to have been fairly common, but agricultural and other work was done with the help of hired labour. There were even then some untouchables—the *chandalas* as they were called, whose chief business was the disposal of dead bodies.

Trade associations and craft-guilds had already assumed importance. 'The existence of trade associations,' says Fick, 'which grew partly for economical reasons, better employment of capital, facilities of intercourse, partly for protecting the legal interest of their class, is surely to be traced to an early period of Indian culture.'

The *Jatakas* say that there were 18 craft-unions but they actually mention only four: the wood-workers and the masons, the smiths, the leather workers, and the painters.

Even in the epics there are references to trade and craft organizations. The *Mahabharata* says: "the safeguard of corporations (guilds) is union." It is said that 'the merchant-guilds were of such authority that the king was not allowed to establish any laws repugnant to these trade unions. The heads of guilds are mentioned next after priests as objects of a king's anxious concern.' The chief of the merchants, the *shreshthi* (modern *seth*), was a man of very considerable importance.

One rather extraordinary development emerges from the *Jataka* accounts. This is the establishment of special settlements or villages of people belonging to particular crafts. Thus there was a carpenters' village, consisting, it is said, of a thousand families, a smiths' village and so on. These specialized villages were usually situated near a city, which absorbed their special products and which provided them with the other necessaries of life. The whole village apparently worked on co-operative lines and undertook large orders. Probably out of this separate living and organization the caste system developed and spread out. The example set by the *Brahmins* and the nobility was gradually followed by the manufacturers' corporations and trade-guilds.

Great roads, with travellers' rest-houses and occasional hospitals, covered North India and connected distant parts of the country. Trade flourished not only in the country itself but between India and foreign countries. There was a colony of Indian merchants living at Memphis in Egypt about the fifth century B. C as the discovery of modelled heads of Indians there has shown. Probably there was trade also between India and the islands of South-East Asia. Overseas trade involved shipping and it is clear that ships were built in India both for the inland waterways and ocean traffic. There are references in the epics to shipping duties being paid by merchants coming from afar'.

The *Jatakas* are full of references to merchants' voyages. 'There were overland caravans across deserts going westward to the sea-port of Broach and north towards *Gandhara* and Central Asia. From Broach ships went to the Persian Gulf for Babylon (Baveru). There was a great deal of river traffic and, according to the *Jatakas*, ships travelled from Benares, Patna, Champa (Bhagalpur) and other places to the sea and thence to southern ports and Ceylon and Malaya. Old Tamil poems tell us of the flourishing port of Kaveripattinam on the Kaveri river in the South, which was a centre of international trade. These ships must have been fairly large as it is said in the *Jatakas* that 'hundreds' of merchants and emigrants embarked on a ship.

In the 'Milinda' (this is of the first century A.C. Milinda is the Greek Bactrian King of North India who became an ardent Buddhist) it is said: "As a ship-owner who has become wealthy by constantly levying freight in some seaport town, will be able to traverse the high seas, and go to Vanga (Bengal) or Takkola, or China or Sovira, or Surat or Alexandria, or the Koromandel coast, or further India, or any other place where ships do congregate."

Among the exports from India were 'Silks, muslins, the finer sorts of cloth, cutlery and armour, brocades, embroideries and rugs, perfumes and drugs, ivory and ivory work, jewellery and gold (seldom silver)—these were the main articles in which the merchant dealt.'

India, or rather North India, was famous for her weapons of war especially for the quality of her steel, her swords and daggers. In the fifth century B.C. a large body of Indian troops, cavalry and infantry, accompanied the Persian army to Greece. When Alexander invaded Persia, it is stated in the famous Persian epic poem Firdusi's *Shahnamah* that swords and other weapons were hurriedly sent for by the Persians from India. The old (pre-Islamic) Arabic word for sword is *muhannad* which means "from Hind" or India. This word is in common use still.

Ancient India appears to have made considerable progress in the treatment of Iron. There is an enormous Iron Pillar near Delhi which has baffled modern scientists, who have been unable to discover by what process it was made, which has enabled it to withstand oxidization and other atmospheric changes. The inscription on it is in the Gupta script which was in use from the fourth to the seventh century A.C. Some scholars are, however, of opinion that the pillar itself is much older than this inscription, which was added later.

Alexander's invasion of India in the fourth century B.C. was, from a military point of view, a minor affair. It was more of a raid across the border and not a very successful raid for him. He met with such stout resistance from a border chieftain that the contemplated advance into the heart of India had to be reconsidered. If a small ruler on the frontier could fight thus, what of the larger and more powerful kingdoms further south? Probably this was the main reason why his army refused to march further and insisted on returning.

The quality of India's military strength was seen very soon after Alexander's return and death when Seleucus attempted another invasion. He was defeated by Chandragupta and driven back. Indian armies then had an advantage which others lacked: this was the possession of trained war-elephants; which might be compared to the tanks of to-day. Seleucus Nikator obtained 500 of these war-elephants from India for his campaign against Antigonus in Asia Minor in 302 B.C., and military historians say that those elephants were the decisive factor in the battle which ended in the death of Antigonus and the flight of his son Demetrius.

There are books on the traning of elephants, the breeding of horses, etc., each one of these is called a *Shastra*. This word has come to mean scripture or holy writ, but it was applied indiscriminately to every kind of knowledge and science, varying from mathematics to dancing. In fact the line between religious and secular knowledge was not strictly drawn. They overlapped and everything that seemed useful to life was the object of inquiry.

Writing in India goes back to the most ancient times. Old pottery belonging to the Neolithic period is inscribed with writing in the *Brahmi* characters. Mohen-jo-daro has inscriptions which have not so far been wholly deciphered. The *Brahmi* inscription found all over India are undoubtedly the basic script from which *Devanagri* and others have arisen in India. Some of Ashoka's inscriptions are in the *Brahmi* script; others, in the north-west, are in the *Kharoshti* script.

As early as the sixth or seventh century B.C., Panini wrote his great grammar of the Sanskrit language. He mentions previous grammars and already in his time Sanskrit had crystallized and become the language of evergrowing literature. Panini's book is something more than a mere grammar. It has been described by the Soviet professor Th. Stcherbatsky of Leningrad as "one of the greatest productions of the human mind." Panini is still the standard authority on Sanskrit grammar, though subsequent grammarians have added to it and interpreted it. It is interesting to note that Panini mentions the Greek script. This indicates that there were some kind of contacts between India and the Greeks long before Alexander came to the East.

The study of astronomy was especially pursued and it often merged into astrology. Medicine had its text-books and there were hospitals. Dhanwantari is the legendary founder of the Indian science of medicine. The best known old text-books, however, date from the early centuries of the Christian era. These are by Charak on medicine and Sushruta on surgery. Charak is supposed to have been the royal court physician of Kanishka who had his capital in the north-west. These text-books enumerate a large number of diseases and give methods of diagnosis and treatment. They deal with surgery, obstetrics, baths, diet, hygiene, infant-feeding and medical education. There is an experimental approach and dissection of dead bodies was practised in the course of surgical training. Various surgical instruments are mentioned by Sushruta, as well as operations, including amputation of limbs, abdominal, caesarian section, cataract, etc. Wounds

were sterilized by fumigation. In the third or fourth century B. C. there were also hospitals for animals. This was probably due to the influence of Jainism and Buddhism with their emphasis on non-violence.

In mathematics the ancient Indians made some epoch-making discoveries, notably that of the zero sign, of the decimal place-value system, of the use of the minus sign, and the use in algebra of letters of the alphabet to denote unknown quantities. It is difficult to date these as there was always a big time-lag between the discovery and its practical application. But it is clear that the beginnings of arithmetic, algebra and geometry were laid in the earliest period. Ten formed the basis of enumeration in India even at the time of the *Rig Veda*. The time and number sense of the ancient Indians was extraordinary. They had a long series of number names for very high numerals. The Greeks, Romans, Persians and Arabs had apparently no terminology for denominations above the thousand or at most the myriad ($10^4 = 10,000$). In India there were 18 specific denominations (10^{18}) and there are even longer lists. In the story of Buddha's early education he is reported to have named denominations up to 10^{53}.

At the other end of the scale there was a minute division of time of which the smallest unit was approximately one-seventeenth of a second, and the smallest lineal measure is given as something which approximates to 1.3x7-10 inches. All these big and small figures were no doubt entirely theoretical and used for philosophical purposes. Nevertheless the old Indians, unlike other ancient nations, had vast conceptions of time and space. They thought in a big way. Even their mythology deals with ages of hudreds of millions of years. To them the vast periods of modern geology or the astronomical distances of the stars would not have come as a surprise. Because of this background in India, Darwin's and other similar theories could not create here the turmoil and inner conflict which they produced in Europe in the middle of the nineteenth century. The popular mind in Europe was used to a time scale which did not go beyond a few thousand years.

In the *Arthashastra* we are given the weights and measures which were in use in North India in the fourth century B.C. There use to be careful supervision of the weights in the market places.

In the Epic period we have frequent mention of some kind of forest universities, situated not far from a town or city, where students gathered round wellknown scholars for training and education, which comprised a variety of subjects, including military training. These forest abodes were preferred so as to avoid the distractions of city life and enable the students to lead a disciplined and continent life. After some years of this training they were supposed to go back and live as householders and citizens. Probably these forest schools consisted of small groups, though there are indications that a popular teacher would attract large numbers.

Benares has always been a centre of learning and even in Buddha's day it was old and known as such. It was in the Deer Park near Benares that Buddha preched his first sermon. But Benares does not appear to have been at any time anything like a university, such as existed, then and later, in other parts of India. There were numerous groups there consisting of a teacher and his disciples, and often between rival groups there was fierce debate and argument.

But in the north-west, near modern Peshwar, their was an ancient and famous university at *Takshashila* or Taxila. This was particularly noted for science, especially medicine, and the arts, and people went to it from distant parts of India. The *Jataka* stories are full of instances of sons of nobles and Brahamins travelling, unattended and unarmed, to Taxila to be educated. Probably students came also from Central Asia and Afghanistan as it was conveniently situated. It was considered an honour and distinction to be a graduate of Taxila. Physicians who had studied in the school of medicine there were highly thought of, and it is related that whenever Buddha felt unwell, his admirers brought to him a famous

physician who had graduated from Taxila. Panini, the great grammarian of the sixth/seventh century B.C., is said to have studied there.

Taxila was thus a pre-Buddhist university and a seat of Brahminical learning. During the Buddhist period it became also a centre of Buddhist scholarship and attracted Buddhist students from all over India and across the border. It was the headquarters of the north-western province of the Maurya Empire.

The legal position of women, according to Manu, the earliest exponent of the law, was definitely bad. They were always dependent on somebody---on the father, the husband, or the son. Almost they were treated in law as chattels. And yet from the numerous stories in the epics this law was not applied very rigidly and they held an honoured place in the home and in society. The old law-giver, Manu, himself, says: "Where women are honoured, the Gods dwell." There is no mention of women students at Taxila or any of the old universities. But some of them did function as students somewhere for there is repeated mention of learned and scholarly women. In later ages also there were a number of eminent women scholars. Bad as the legal position of women was in ancient India, judged by modern standards, it was far better than in ancient Greece, Rome, early Christianity, the Cannon Law of mediaeval Europe, and indeed till right up to comparatively modern times at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The exponents of the law from Manu onwards refer to forms of partnership in business. Manu refers chiefly to priests: Yagnavalkya includes trade and agriculture. A later writter, Narada, says: 'Loss, expense, profit of each partner are equal to, more than, or less than those of other partners according to his share (invested) is equal, greater or less. Storage, food, charges (tolls), loss, freightage, expense of keeping, must be paid by each partner in accordance with the terms of agreement.'

Manu's conception of a State was evidently that of a small kingdom. This conception was, however growing and changing, leading to the vast Maurya Empire of the fourth century B. C. and to international contacts with the Greek world.

Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador in India in the fourth century B.C., totally denies the existence of slavery in India. But in this he was wrong as there were certainly domestic slaves and there are references in Indian books of the period to improving the lot of the slaves. It is clear, however, that there was no large-scale slavery and no slave gangs for labour purposes, as were common in many countries then, and this may have led Megasthenes to believe that slavery was completely absent. It was laid down that 'Never shall an *Arya* be subjected to slavery'. Who exactly was an *Arya* and who was not, it is difficult to say but the Aryan fold at that time had come to mean rather vaguely all the four basic castes, including the *Shudras*, but not untouchables.

In China, also, in the days of the early Han Dynasty, slaves were used primarily in domestic service. They were unimportant in agriculture or in large-scale labour works. Both in India and China these domestic slaves formed a very small proportion of the population, and in this important respect there was thus a vast difference between Indian and Chinese society and the contemporary Greek and Roman society.

What were the Indians like in those distant days? It is difficult for us to conceive of a period so far and so different from ours and yet some vague picture emerges from the miscellaneous data that we have. They were a light-hearted race, confident and proud of their traditions, dabbling in the search for the mysterious, full of questions addressed to nature and human life, attaching importance to the standards and values they had created, but taking life easily and joyously and facing death without much concern. Arrian, the Greek historian of Alexander's campaign in North India, was struck by this light-heartedness of the race. 'No nation,' he writes, 'is fonder of singing and dancing than the Indian.'

A PICTURE OF RAMA'S AYODHYA

"And his town like Indra's City—tower and dome
and turret brave—

Rose in proud and peerless beauty, on Sarayu's
limpid wave,

Altar blazed in every mansion, from each home was
bounty given,

Stooped no men to falsehood, questioned none the
will of heaven.

Strong-barred gates and lofty arches, tower and
dome and turret high

Decked the vast and peopled city, fair as mansions
of the sky."



CHAPTER VI

INDIA'S URGE FOR UNITY

All paths lead to Me. (Bhagwadgita)



Tell me where did you get two Gods; who has led you astray? The same God is called differently Allah or Ram, Karim or Keshav, Hari or Hazrat.

The same God is called Mahadev, Muhammad, Brahma or Adam. Every one lives on the same earth, one is called the Hindu, the other the Turk.

The first reads the Vedas, the second the Quran, one is called the Pundit, the other is called Maulana.

They style themselves separately though they are pots of the same earth. Kabir says, both are mistaken; none has got his Rama (God).

(Kabir)

He who sees the one Spirit in all and all in one Spirit, henceforth can look with contempt on no creature. *(Upanishad)*



Ishaq az jumle alam bartar ast
Zan ke een millat Khudai Akbar ast.

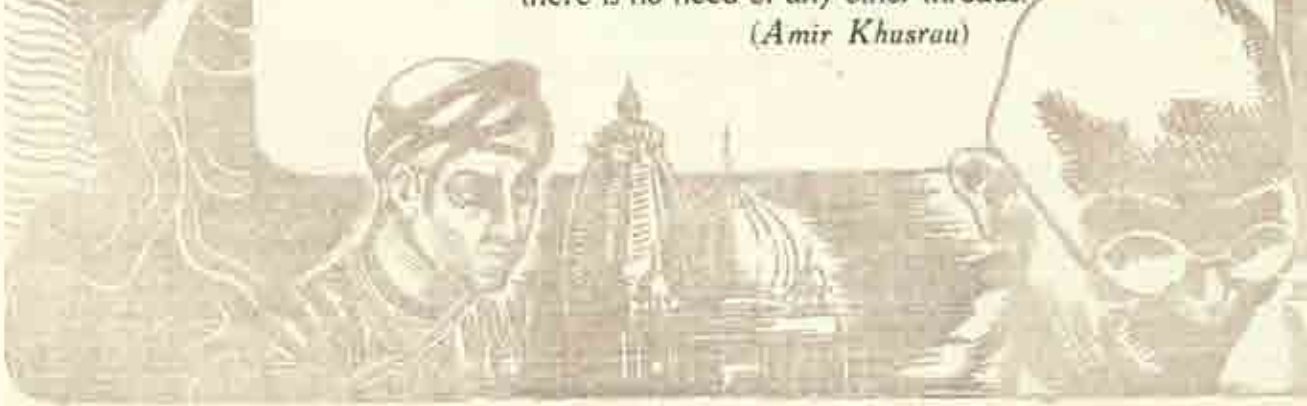
Love is supirior to all the world, for
it is the millat of God the Great.

(Haji Waris Ali Shah)

Kafar-i-Ishqam Musalmani mara darkar naist
Har rag-i-man tar gashta hajat-i-zanar naist.

I am begotten of Love, I need no islam;
I have sacred threads all through my veins,
there is no need of any other threads.

(Amir Khusrau)



"For the well-being of all beings was Religion (Dharma) declared. That only which brings such well-being is Religion. This is sure.....For the making harmless of all beings was Religion declared. That which secureth preservation of beings is Religion. This is sure. He who is the friend of all beings; he who is intent on the welfare of all with act and thought and speech—he only knoweth Religion." (*Mahabharata, Shanti Parva* LXXVIII).

"Hinduism tells everyone to worship God according to his own faith or *Dharma*, and so it lives at peace with all the religions."

(*Gandhiji*)

Maxahab nahin sikhata apas men bair rakhna
Hindi hain watan hai Hindustan Hamara

(*Iqbal*)

"JANAGANAMANA ADHINAYAK JAYA HE"

"Jana gana mana adhinayaka jaya he Bharata bhagya bidhata
Punjaba, Sindhu, Gujrata Maratha Dravida, Utkala, Banga,
Vinda, Himachala, Jamuna, Ganga, utchala jaladhi taranga,
Taba subha name jage, taba subha ashisha mage, gahe tabo jaya gantha,
Janagana mangala dayaka, jaya he Bharata bhagya bidhata
Jaya he, jaya he, jaya he, jaya, jaya, jaya, jayahe.

Aharaha tabo abhano pracharita suni tabo udara bani,
Hindu, Bhouddha, Shika, Jaina, Parashika, Musalmano, Christani,
Purba paschima ashe
Tabo shinghasana pase
Prema haro haya gantha,
Janagana mangalo dayaka jaya he Bharata bhagya bidhata
Jaya he, Jaya he, Jayahe, Jaya, jaya, jaya, jayahe.

Ratri pravatila udila Ravi-chabi purba udayagiri bhale
Gahe bihangama punna samirana naba jibana rasa dhale
Tabo karunaruna rage
Nidrita Bharata jage
Taba charone nata matha
Jaya, Jaya, Jayahe, jayarajeswara Bharata bhagya bidhata
Jayahe, Jayahe, Jayahe, Jaya, jaya, jaya jayahe
Bharata bhagya bidhata."

(*Rabindra Nath Tagore*)

Guide of mankinds' heart, Architect of India's destiny! Let there be an awakening in Thine name. Let all the country in its various parts from the Himalayas to the sea, from end to end wake up and under thy blessings.

Let the followers of various religions, let East and West unite in bonds of love in the shadow of Thy throne, and proclaim Thy name.

Let sleeping India wake into the dawn of a new life, in the light of Thy glory.

INDIA'S URGE FOR UNITY

1. SYNTHESIS OF INDIA'S GENIUS

WHATEVER the word we may use, Indian or Hindi or Hindustani, for our cultural tradition, we see in the past that some inner urge towards synthesis, derived essentially from the Indian philosophic outlook, was the dominant feature of Indian cultural and even racial development. Each incursion of foreign elements was a challenge to this culture, and it met it successfully by a new synthesis and a process of absorption. This was also a process of rejuvenation and new blooms of culture arose out of it, the background and essential basis, however, remaining much the same. C. E. M. Joad has written about this: 'Whatever the reason, it is a fact that India's special gift to mankind has been the ability and willingness of Indians to effect a synthesis of many different elements both of thoughts and peoples, to create, in fact, unity out of diversity.'

(*Nehru*)

Fusion of Racial Cultures

The necessity for change and continuous adaption was recognized and hence grew a passion for synthesis. It was a synthesis not only of the various elements that came into India but also an attempt at a synthesis between the outer and inner life of the individual, between man and nature. There were no such wide gaps and cleavages as seem to exist today. This common cultural background created India and gave it an impress of unity in spite of its diversity. At the root of the political structure was the self governing village system which endured at the base while kings came and went. Fresh migrations from outside and invaders merely ruffled the surface of this structure without touching those roots. The power of the State, however despotic in appearance, was curbed in a hundred ways by customary and constitutional restraints, and no ruler could easily interfere with the rights and privileges of the village community. These customary rights and privileges ensured a measure of freedom both for the community and the individual

Among the people of India today none are more typically Indian or prouder of Indian culture and tradition than the Rajputs. Their heroic deeds in the past have become a living part of that very tradition. Yet many of Rajputs are said to be descended from the Indo-Scythians, and some even from the Huns who came to India. There is no sturdier or finer peasant in India than the *Jat*, wedded to the soil and brooking no interference with his land. He also has Scythian origin. And so too the Kathi, the tall handsome peasant of Kathiawar. The recial origins of some of our people can be traced back with a certain definiteness, of others it is not possible to do so. But whatever the origin might have been, all of them have become distinctively Indian, participating jointly with others in India's culture and looking back on her past traditions as their own.

It would seem that every outside element that has come to India and been absorbed by India, has given something to India and taken much from her: it has contributed to its own and to India's strength. But where it has kept apart, or been unable to become a sharer and a participant in India's life and her rich and diverse culture, it has had no lasting influence, and has ultimately faded away, sometimes injuring itself and India in the process.

(*Nehru*)

2. IMPACT OF ISLAM. THE STORY OF MEDIAEVAL,—SYNTHESIS

(G. C. Sondhi).

Indian history of the Muslim period as available in our text books has been perhaps the most influential factor of discord between the Hindus and Muslims. Six centuries of common life of the people-even though professing different religions-has been shown only as a picture of invasions and wars, the rise and fall of dynasties, with gruesome accounts of plunder and rapine of the barbarian hordes that came across the border and set up a bigotted and tyrannous rule over the native population, with the object of religious prosecution and conversion. The Hindus are prone to think that the true Indian civilisation was pre-Islamic and to overlook the transformations that these centuries brought into it and richly coloured Indian thought and life. It is even stranger that Muslims also are prone to look beyond the glorious achievement and florescence of Islamic culture in India to other countries and earlier periods. "Indianisation" of the Arabic form and traditions is often considered a taint on its prestine purity.

Never any propaganda has been so successful, as wrongly written mediaeval history of the Indian people.

Certainly instance are not wanting of some earlier Muslim invaders and Kings being guilty of barbarous crimes, which were justified in the name of Islam. Perhaps like other scriptures, passages in the Quran bear an interpretation of intolerance and a sanction to kill the non-believer. The wonder is, that, such acts are idealised and such interpretations held up, by some Musalmans themselves. But in the Quran-as in all religions-we find revelations that breathe an atmosphere of tolerance to the nonbelievers and of a compromise with them. In the early history of the Muslim Khalifs, we find instances of tolerance of which any people or religion might be proud. When Mohammed Bin Qasim sent information of his exploits to his Khalifa that he has demolished temples, converted Hindus to Islam and successfully waged war against them, the Khalifa reprimanded him, for it was against sanction and usage of the Holy Law and orderd Qasim to compensate the damage done by him. *(Elphinstone pp 302-303)*

In the hands of Babarian conquerors Islam, like Christianity in Europe, underwent a distortion. The cruelty of a Timur it may be remembered, was no less exhibited in his expeditions against the believer. It was Timur who "put 2,000 Shaiks of Islam one upon the other to build a living human wall and plastered them alive." It was Timur who destroyed his Khalifa to take his place.

Neither the invasions nor the wars of Muslim Kings were just a religious crusade, though one or two invaders idealised their action as all aggressors and conquerors in history have done by taking credit of an unselfish ultra mundane motive. The earlier invasions were naturally resisted by Hindus who inhabited the country and took shape of conflicts between Hindus and Muslims. Similarly the earlier wars to extend and consolidate their Kingdoms were naturally against the Hindu Kings. But many of the later wars which the Emperors at Delhi had to fight were not against Hindu but against Muslim sovereigns. All the Muslim invaders who came from the North-west after Ghori, had to and in fact did invade a Muslim state. The invasion of Timur and Nadirshah were not against Hindu Kings but against Muslim Kings of Delhi. Babar had to fight and defeat not a Hindu King but Ibrahim Lodi, and combined forces of Rajputs and Muslims opposed him. Humayun had to fight Sher Shah and Akbar other Muslim rulers to consolidate the Empire. Aurangzeb spent the last years of his life in a long drawn struggle to subdue the Kingdom of Bijapore and Golconda and with the help of well known Hindu generals Wars and invasions were actuated not by religious zeal in India, as elsewhere, but by temporal and mundane motives. In fact these were many more wars in this history between Muslim and Muslim than between Muslim and Hindu kings.

Also it has to be remembered that this history of 600 years, beginning with the thirteenth

century when Qutubuddin Aibak established the sultanet in 1206, down to the end of the eighteenth century, when the last Mughal fought a losing battle for the Delhi throne with the help of the Hindus and the Muslims against the British power, is not just a history of conflict and wars between antagonistic religious communities. The far more over-mastering and significant fact, is of the harmonious common life and enrichment of a common mode and culture, by a process of fusion or reconcilation between the two.

The Muslim invaders had soon made India their home and became a part of the other people.

"The Muslim in India became the son of the soil. This course was irrevocably decided for him when Qutubuddin separated the Sultanate of Delhi from the Ghaznivite Empire. That a Muslim King should not discriminate against any section of his subjects was an injuction, clear and definite, for he was enjoined to "regard all sects of religion with the single eye of favour, and not bemother some and bestap-mother others." It is interesting to trace the growth of the love for India as the mother country as we compare Babar's Memoirs and Abul Fazls' *Ain-i-Akbari*. The founder of the Empire complains "Hindustan is a country that has few pleasures to recommend it". But gone was this newcomer's attitude by the time that Akbar came to the throne, whose historian is carried away by the "beauties of Hindustan" and apologises for a digression which proceeded from "the love of my native country." *(Sir Sultan Ahmed: A Treaty between India and the United Kingdom, quoted in India Divided.")*

The real history of the middle ages in India is of a natural process of and conscious attempts at a new synthesis of ideas and a reapproachment and intermingling of life between the Hindus and Muslims on a thousand planes. There was a natural resistance at first against everything that came with an invader and a defensive shuttering of windows against a cult and ideas that sought acceptance by the sword. Forcible conversions hindered the deeper understanding of what was fine in Islam and the culture associated with it. But in course of time, the followers of the two faiths by long association, by a community of interests in daily life, unconsciously approached each other. The old genius of India for synthesis asserted itself and a line of thinkers, saints and faqirs, both Hindus and Muslims, was thrown up to bring about a reconcilation between the ideas of the two religions at their highest level.

It is wrong to hold that Islam had its last word of truth in a by-gone age. Even in Arab a quest was afoot and the Arabs were keen students of and deeply influenced by Hindu, Buddhist and other ideas and literature. Thus the *Sufism* of Mansoor was a new interpretation of Islam as influenced by India, with a very near approach to Vendantism of Hindu philosoph. A well known representative of the *Sufi* School in India was Haji Waris Ali Sahab. In India Islam and Hinduism were influencing each other. Islam was being enriched with a new metaphysical depth, though also acquiring some of the Hindu forms and rituals in its brotherhood. Hinduism was undergoing a new renaisance once agains in getting rid of ceremonial worship of gods and goddesses, Brahmin supremacy, caste differences and touchability. Though in practice it also acquired such Muslim evils as *purdah*, and militant loyalty to a cult.

There was a remarkable line of reformers who propagated reconciliation of the two religions at their best. The great Chaitanya of Bengal (1484 A.D.) had both Hindu and Muslim disciples. Ramanand the great Saint had a Muslim weaver-Kabir-as disciple. Kabir was the personification of the process of Hindu Muslim union in mediaeval India. Kabir held aloft a religion of Universal Path, a religion to which no Hindu or Muslim could take objection. Steeped in Hindu mysticism, denounced trenchantly the worship of idols, ceremonial worship, caste on the one hand, and blind trust in one Prophet and his book, pilgrimage and fasts on the other hand had. He repeats again and again that Hindus and Muslims are one, they worship the same God they are children of the same father and made of the same blood. The acceptance of

the Kabir cult reflects a stage of rational thinking which appears higher than our Twentieth century standards.

Kabir's great friend was Saint Taqui of Suhrawardi sect. His daughter Kamal was married to a Brahmin. Saint Ravidas was a Chamar and with Namdev was one great contemporary of Kabir.

But the spiritual successor to Kabir was the great Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhsim. Nanak represents the high watermark of this rennaissant philosophy and synthesis, and his words have an eternal wisdom and inspiration for all of us of every cult. Nanak raised his voice against idolatary—both Hindu and Muslim, caste system and communalism. He visited Mecca and his visit is enshrined in a Nanak's "Durgah" and his embodied teachings in Arabic in Baghdad. His teachings were so liberal that while they—the *Japaji* is a daily prayer with many Hindus and Sikhs, his muslim disciples claimed his dead body for burial.

And it is not only in the realms of philosophic ideas that this reapproachment worked. There are numerous instance of emlowments made by Muslims rulers to Hindus seats of worship and learning and Vice-Versa, in Muslim and Marhatta States.

In fact the legacy of ancient Indian culture and literature that is bequeathed to modern times is not of purely Hindu India but of the transformed new modes: what influences and permeates the life in the villages and towns is the new interpreted forms and intergrated thought and art expression. It is Kabir and Nanak or Tulsidas, Surdas and other poets who move and lay down the pattern for emotinal and intellectual life of the masses of people.

All art and literature in India has been the expression of a realisation in mystic ecstasy, of a harmony or identity of the outer world with the inner, of self with what is expressed as God. This is the unity that underlies manifold diversity, expressed not only in its exalted form when it becomes "art", but in work-a-day outlook, modes and forms of life and organisation.

The Hindu and Islamic ideas and culture were not completely intergrated it is true and conflict in some planes continued between the two. But there was a growing process of reconciliations and even fusion and if it had been allowed to go on, even inspite of occasional putting back of the clock by rulers like Aurangzeb or the revivalist movements in both religions, a complete synthesis was bound to be achieved. This process however was arrested and a deliberate process of conflict and separation put in motion on the advent of a new factor, the British Imperial dominations as we shall see.

But even the partial inner unity of the Hindu and Muslim thought and expression produced renaissance of which the saints and philosophers, poets and writers were only a part. A remarkable level in art, architecture, music and painting, administrative and social reform was reached with the coming of the house of Babar. Both the liberality of thought and the intellectual quest for new truths and the creative energy that this spirit released, were a part of contemporary world forces, no doubt. These were the times of the Renaissance in Europe. A similar wave was passing over the central Asia. In India this renaissance was invigorated by impact of the dynamic new idea of Islam with those of the Hindus. It reached its high water mark with Akbar.

Akbar was thus no accident but a product of his times.

It is strange that the significance and greatness of Akbar as a symbol of a glorious period in Indian history is not widely appreciated even by the Muslims in India. They look with pride—and rightly—at the splendour of Mogul Courts, the marvels of monuments they have left and the picture of the glorious civilisation which the 'memoirs" reveal. But it is a measure of our decadence that we do not gauge Akbar, the thinker and man, at his true worth. This single Muslim king was sufficient to fill up the rather meagre

Muslim tradition of thier heroes in India—a tradition that makes a people truly a part of the country's soil and spirit.

Akbar exceeds by far all his great contemporaries for his greatness was not confined to the extention of a political and commercial Empire but an Empire of the spirit that embraced the whole world. His Ibadat Khana was a daily "parliament of all religions"—that prevailed in his time and in face of the intolerance of the Mullahas he set in motion free intetchange of ideas and a metamorphis of the Sunni, Shia, Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Sikh, Zorastian, Jew and Christians, religious ; and collected intellectuals and scholars from far and near.

The mediaeval mould for Scientific quest was religious catholicity. But the dream of Akbar was the dream of one country and one world, of social relationship based on Justice and tolerance, which the world is groping for even today.

It is remarkable, how this illiterate man lived in a world of scholars and books, of intellectual and cultural pursuits and attached to himself the brilliant galaxy of philosophers, writers, artists and administrators.

The tradition of Akbar is like that of Asoka and earlier hero kings of Indian history, and its inspiration being fresher, is even brighter but for the passing clouds of contemporary politics.

There is very little directly of the picture of the people in the time when Moguls ruled. But the name of the great thinkers and saints, and kings and administrators and a record of their work gives that picture fairly well. We read of Babar in his own memoirs and are struck with the remarkably modern and highly cultured outlook and interests of this man. Akbar's successors live in the magnificient and beautiful monuments that they left behind.

The life in the towns, influeneed by the courtlife, attained a high degree of sophistication, in literature, art craft, modes and manners, in dress and diet, luxuries and refinements among the urban population. The centres of Delhi Agra, Lucknow set the fashion that was accepted far and wide in all courts, including such rebel states as Rajputana and Maharasthra. This Mogul stamp persisted in the parlours, the zenana, the wardrobe and the dining room, in the courtliness of etiquette, in the love for things that Babar loved in life, in the upper classes of Indian society, up to our day.

In the life of the village people, the Muslims, mostly converts from the Hindus, retained the older Hindu outlook and social forms. Even the caste prejudices, dislike of widow remarriage, love of ritual, and 'idolaterous' worship were acquired, by Muslims-a fact of which Hali complains in his *'Shikwa.'*

The common people of the villages observed similar ceremonies of birth, death, and marraige, fairs and festivals round the seasons. The dress, manner of cooking, seclusion of women, the joint family, styles of houses were common to both in a province. The language of the both was the same. In the villages there was more social contact between Hindu and Muslim families, inspite of the deplorable Hindu taboos against touchability and inter-dining, than in the cities. In towns and much less in villages, the poison of sectarian communal hatred was a modern and artificial growth

Several writers have traced the growth of a synthesis in the field of Indian art and architecture, painting and music during the middle period. A Hindu-Muslim style in architecture was gradually evolved. "The simple severity of the Muslim architecture was toned down and the plastic exuberance of the Hindu was restrained." (Havell).

In painting, "upon the plasticity of Ajanta were imposed the new laws of symmetry, proportion and spacing from Samarkand and Herat." (Tarachand),

In music, new schools, new modes, new *ragas* and new instruments were added to the rich legacy of Hindu music.

A new language was born the "Hindustani" language, with minor differences of vocabulary, written both in Persian and Sanskrit script and drawing from both these languages, but distinct and virile and understood and developed by both the Hindu and Muslims. This common language was enriched and refined by writers of both communities and became the virtual national language of the whole country.

This aspect of mediaeval history has not been unknown to our scholars and among the latest is Dr. Rajendra Prasad who has dealt with it at length in his book 'India Divided'. We take the following two passages quoted by him from among Hindu and Muslim historians:

'It is hardly possible to exaggerate the extent of Muslim influence over Indian life in all departments. But nowhere else is it shown so vividly and so picturesquely as in customs, in intimate details of domestic life, in music, in the fashions of dress, in the ways of cooking, in the ceremonial of marriage, in the celebration of festivals and fairs and the courtly institutions and etiquette of Maratha, Rajput and Sikh Princes. In the days of Babar, the Hindu and Muslim lived and though so much alike that he was forced to notice their peculiar "Hindustani Way": his successors so gloriously adorned and so marvellously enriched this legacy that India might well be proude to-day of the heritage which they in their turn have left behind. (Dr. Tarachand).

We are constantly told that the Mohammedans are a distinct people, as unlike the Hindus as the Semitic is unlike the Aryan: that there are differences penetrating to the very root of life; differences of habit, temperament, social customs racial type; that these differences are so vital and so enormous that fusion between the two is a hopeless impossibility, and impracticable dream. Now I am not at all sure that this argument is sound. Admitting that the Mohammedans came to India as foreign conquerors as utterly different to the Hindus as the British are different to us both, we cannot forget that for many centuries they have lived side by side, freely mixing with the people of the land, naturally influencing each other, taking Indian women as their wives adopting local customs and local usages; in fine, permeated and pervaded through and through by local characteristics and local peculiarities. The most infallible proof of this we find in the marriage ceremonies, which are entirely Hindu ceremonies, in the customs of the women folk, such as the use of the vermillion mark, the symbol and token of wedded life, the restrictions imposed upon the dress and diet of widows, the disapproval, nay, condemnation of widow marriages, and indeed in a thousand little practices behind the zenana. All this indicates somewhat more than mere superficial connexion between the two communities which mainly divide the Indian population. A yet clearer proof is the unity of language, and the similarity of dress. Moreover, say what you will, a large number, in fact, the largest portion of the muhamedan population are Hindu converts to Islam. It rests upon as unwarranted assumption, but upon well-ascertained facts, that Hinduism and muhammedanism have acted and reacted upon each other, influencing social institutions, colouring religious thoughts with their mutual, typical and religious hues! these being conspicuous illustrations of the union of the two streams of Hinduism and Islam, which since Muslim conquest, have flowed side by side in India. (Mr. Khodabaksh)

It is strange that "This beautiful warp and woof of which has been woven into the most delicate and exquisite fabric of our social life by unintended action or concious effort of innumerable men and women—Hindu and Muslim—in the course of centuries" is sought" to be torn to pieces by the cruel and undiscerning hand of misunderstanding politics." (Rajendra Prasad)

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The secret will of Zahiruddin Mohammad Badshah Ghazi (Babar) to Prince Nasiruddin Muhammad Humayun :

'Oh Son ! the Kingdom of India is full of different religions. Praised be God that He bestowed upon thee its sovereignity. It is incumbent on thee to wipe all religious preiudices off the tablet of thy heart, administer justice according to the ways of every religion. Avoid especially the sacrifice of the cow by which thou canst capture the hearts of the people of India and subjects of this country may be bound up with royal obligations.

'Do not ruin the temples and shrines of any community which is obeying the laws of Government. Administer justice in such a manner that the King be pleased with the subjects and the subjects with the King. The cause of Islam can be promoted more by the sword of obligation than by the sword of tyranny.

'Overlook the dissensions of the Shiyas and the Sunnis, else the weakness of Islam is manifest.

'And let the subjects of different beliefs harmonise in conformity with the four elements (of which the human body is harmoniously composed) so that the body of the Kingdom may be free from different dissensions. The memoirs of Timur, the master of conjunctions, (the fortunate) should always be before thine eyes so that thou mayest become experienced in the affairs of administration. First Jamaidiulawal 935 A.H.

3. FELLOWSHIP OF FAITHS.

My Hinduism and My Islam

(Prof. Abdul Majid Khan.)

"Sensible men are all of the same religion."—Disraeli.

"There is only one religion though there are hundred versions of it." Shaw.

The instinct of religion is deeply rooted in human nature. Religion is an important factor in our lives, as it is the only differentia of man. The subject of 'Religion' has caused much diversity of opinion and confusion of thought since the days of Adam. The ignorant cave-dwiller and the wise philosopher have tried to interpret it according to their varying mental visions. But noisy, disputions, bigoted and biased persons come to fisticuffs like the blind men who were inherently incapable of giving an adequate description of the elephant.

In almost all the living religions of the world, God is the centre and mankind the circumference; God is the main trunk of the tree and different peoples are so many branches. The Ever-Present God, the Good Shepherd is the Eternal Father of all living creatures.

"Father of all! in every age. In every clime adored, by saint, by savage and by sage, Jehovah, Jove or Lord; Thou Great First Cause, least understood. Who all my sense confounded. To know but this, that Thou art good, and that myself am blind." Pope.

God is One and there is organic unity of the world. Those who have eyes can see that from time immemorial the Almighty God has been treating the whole of humanity as one family. His glorious manifestation amply bear it out. When the glorious lamp of heaven-the sun-shines in full splendour it gives light and life to the whole world irrespective of colour and creed. When the silvery moon's beautiful image reflected in a limpid stream, Hindus and Muslims alike can enjoy it. When countless stars twinkle in the azure skies, it is time for meditation and contemplation the higher things of the mind and the spirit, both for Hindus as well as for Muslims.

The Communal Problem

The communal problem is anything but religious in its origin, and while referring to Islam and Hinduism, it is altogether wrong to imply that no two religions could be more antagonistic and hostile. In this connection it is really refreshing to know the views of two eminent British writers:—

(i) "And as regards fundamental principles," writes Sir Francis Young-Husband, "there might even be a nearer approach than the more bigoted might suppose. Islam insists that God is one. Hinduism recognises many gods. The two 'seem' irreconcilable. But the Hindu philosopher holds that these myriad gods and godlets are only manifestations of one Supreme Being. And the ordinary Hindu villager just speaks of God. God has sent the rain: God has withheld the rain. In this simple mind, as in the philosopher's and in the Moslem's, there is one God. And surely at the highest, among the mystics of both Islam and Hinduism, Moslems and Hindus—are not so very far apart. When the Moslem saint Mansur sings:—

'O! how the Highest High can condescend,
And how the lowest low can rise and soar
Even to thy Presence, even to Thy Heart,
O Mightiest of the mighty (yet more dear
Than mighty) ever nearer and more near,
Until he is and shall be ever more,
O Mightiest of the mighty, what Thou art.'

He can not be far distant from the Hindu Yogis in their moments of highest rapture. At the summit the tension between Hindus and Moslems must relax and vanish. In the highest heights both are fellow worshippers of God."—Page 153 and 154, 'Dawn in India," by Sir Francis Younghusband.

(ii) "Continuity there is when you stand back from the picture and see it in its right pers-

pective. Hindu and Muslim cultures meet at the top. Akbar's Gate of Victory at Fatehpur Sikri and the ornate Dravadian temples of South India both proclaim Rama-krishna's saying that "Truth is One, sages call it by different names." Pages 5, "Indian Pageant," by F. Yeats Brown.

The present-day challenge to humanity is clear. Hath not a Muslim eyes? Hath not a Hindu hands? Hindus and Moslems are fed with same food: hurt with the same weapons: subject to the same disease: healed by the same means: warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer. Psychologists maintan that in final analysis three main instincts are the inner springs of the actions of all human beings,—Love, Fear and Hatred.

Religion is a quest for spiritual realities: Beauty, Truth, Goodness: and only those folks are truly religious-minded who are in search of God through man. In other words, Religion is conscious relationship between man and his Maker and the expression of that relationship in human conduct. Here are some of the main features of Islam and Hinduism. The idea of the dominant characteristic of Islam, which means "to enter into peace" is peace and a Moslem is one who has made peace with God and man. Peace with God implies complete submission to His will and peace with man not only connotes non-injury to another fellow being but means doing good to him. "There is no compulsion in religion." Quran, ii, 257. Also note "As to those who make a division in their religion and become sectarians, have nothing to do with them: their affair is with God and He will tell them what they have done." —Quaran, vi, 160.

"Men were of one religion and one God." Quran, ii, 209. "They are all brethren who believe in One God." Quran, ii, 10. Equally emphatic is Hinduism on the virtues of universal peace. "Aum, peace be in the heavenly regions, peace in the middle spaces, peace on the earth, peace in the waters (Seas), peace in the plants, peace in the woods: the gods all have peace, God of gods have peace, all creatures have peace: peace, living peace, reign all round: this all embracing peace come within me." Vajurveda, XXXVI, 17. Mark carefully the following. "A common purpose do I lay before you, and worship with your general oblations." Rigveda, X, 191. The Bhagvat declares "Previously there was one scripture, one hymn, one God, one sacrifice and one caste." "All have come out of one stock." The Mahabharata, Chapter 188.

There is no doubt that both Islam and Hinduism aim at the unflinching pursuit of truth: firm faith in the potency of good: ungrudging service of humanity at large: and righteous action. It is senseless to think to feel or talk in terms of the conflict of creeds: as all sensible persons swear by the Fellowship of Faiths and Creedal Concord. Let us all rise above the pestilential vapours of ignorance: the choking atmosphere of superstition, the murky clouds of selfishness and the foul gutter of bigotry. Let each one of us echo the inimitable words of "Faizi" who has stated the pith of the faith of Emperor Akbar, in the following terms:—

"O God, in every temple I see those
who seek Thee
And in every tongue that is spoken
Thou art praised.
Amidst I frequent the Christian
cloister, anon the Mosque
But Thee only I seek from face to face,
Heresy to the heretic-dogma to the Orthodox.
But the dust of the rose-petal belongs to the heart
of the perfume seller."

—(0)—

4. COMMON HERITAGE OF ALL INDIANS

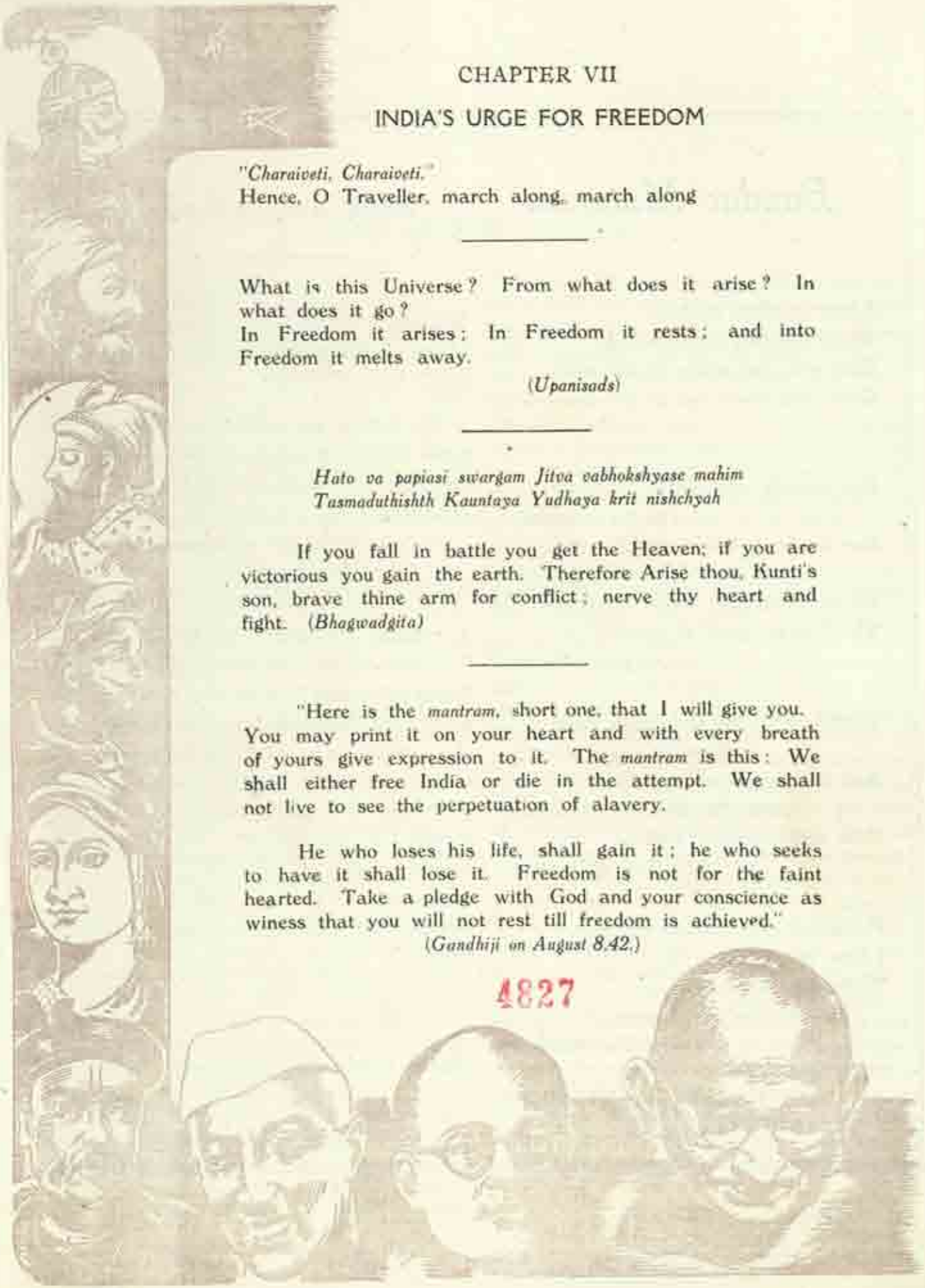
"If we had been an independent nation, all of us in this country, working together in the present for a common future, would no doubt have looked to our common past with equal pride.

Iran, without in any way weakening in its religious faith, has deliberately gone back to its pre-Islamic days of greatness and utilised this memory to strengthen its present-day nationalism.

So also in other countries. The past of India, with all its cultural variety and greatness, was a common heritage of all the Indian people, Hindu, Moslem, Christian and others, and their ancestors had helped to build it. The fact of subsequent conversion to other faith did not deprive them of this heritage; just as the Greeks, after their conversion to Christianity, did not lose their pride in the mighty achievements of the ancestors, or the Italians in the great days of the Roman Republic and early Empire. If all the people of India had been converted to Islam or Christianity, her cultural heritage would still have remained to inspire them and give them that poise and dignity, which a long record of civilised existance with all its mental struggles with the problems of life gives a people."

(Nehru)





CHAPTER VII

INDIA'S URGE FOR FREEDOM

"Charaiveti, Charaiveti."
Hence, O Traveller, march along, march along

What is this Universe? From what does it arise? In what does it go?
In Freedom it arises; In Freedom it rests; and into Freedom it melts away.

(Upanisads)

Hato va papiasi swargam Jitva vabhokshyase mahim
Tasmaduthishth Kauntaya Yudhaya krit nishchyah

If you fall in battle you get the Heaven; if you are victorious you gain the earth. Therefore Arise thou, Kunti's son, brave thine arm for conflict; nerve thy heart and fight. *(Bhagwadgita)*

"Here is the *mantram*, short one, that I will give you. You may print it on your heart and with every breath of yours give expression to it. The *mantram* is this: We shall either free India or die in the attempt. We shall not live to see the perpetuation of alavery.

He who loses his life, shall gain it; he who seeks to have it shall lose it. Freedom is not for the faint hearted. Take a pledge with God and your conscience as winess that you will not rest till freedom is achieved."

(Gandhiji on August 8,42.)

4827

Bandae Mataram

I bow to thee, mother,
Richly-watered, richly-fruited,
Cool with the winds of the south,
Dark with the crops of the harvest,
the Mother!

Her strands rejoicing in the glory
of the moonlight,
Her lands clothed beautifully with
her trees in flowering bloom
Sweet of laughter sweet of speech
The Mother, giver of boons,
giver of bliss!

Terrible with the clamorous shout
of Seventy millon throats,
And the sharpness of swords
raised in twice millon hands,
Who saith to thee, Mother,
that thou art weak?

Holder of multitudinous strength,
I bow to her who saves,
To her who drives from her
the armies of her foemen,
The Mother!

(Translated by Sri Aurobindo)

"Swaraj is my birth right"
(Tilak.)

We believe that it is the inalienable right of the Indian people, as of an other people to have freedom.....

We believe also that if any Government deprives a people of these rights and oppresses them, the people have a further right to alter it or abolish it.

Congress Declaration of Independence
Jan. 26, 1930)

"THERE ARE SHACKLES ROUND OUR COUNTRY, and we must tear ourselves free. Every pull means that our eyes come out of the socket, but there is no other method of emancipation. We fear the roguery of the ruthless: even in that fear there is an element of respect. But we hate the roguery of the coward. The British Empire to-day is disgraced by our detestation. The hate will give us strength, we will win by virtue of this hate."

(Tagore.)

Give me blood and I will give you Liberty

(Netaji)

INDIA'S URGE TO FREEDOM

"The East bowed low before the blast
In patient, deep disdain;
She let the legions thunder past,
And plunged in thought again."

SO says the poet and his lines are often quoted. It is true the East, or at any rate that part of it which is called India, has been enamoured of thinking, often of thinking about matters which to those who consider themselves practical men seem absurd and pointless. She has always honoured thought and the men of thought, the highbrows, and has refused to consider the men of the sword or the possessors of money as superior to them. Even in her days of degradation, she has clung to thought and found some comfort in it.

But it is not true that India has ever bowed passively before the blast or been indifferent to the passage of foreign legions. Always she has resisted them, often successfully, sometimes unsuccessfully, and even when she failed for the time being, she has remembered and prepared herself for the next attempt. Her method has been two-fold: to fight them and drive them out, and to absorb those who could not be driven away. She resisted, with considerable success, Alexander's legions, and immediately after his death drove out the Greek garrisons in the North. Later she absorbed the Indo-Greeks and the Indo-Scythians and ultimately again established a national hegemony. She fought the Huns for generations and drove them out; such as remained being absorbed. When the Arabs came they stopped near the Indus. The Turkis and Afghans spread further only gradually. It took them several centuries to establish themselves firmly on the throne of Delhi. It was continuous, long drawn-out conflict and, while this struggle was going on, the other process of absorption and indianization was also at work, ending in the invaders becoming as much Indian as any one else. Akbar became the great representative of the old Indian ideal of a synthesis of differing elements and their fusion into a common nationality. Because he identified himself with India, India took to him although he was a new-comer. Because of this he built well and laid the foundations of a splendid empire. So long as his successors kept in line with this policy and with the genius of the nation, their empire endured. When they broke away and opposed the whole drift of national development, they weakened and their empire went to pieces. New movements arose, narrow in outlook but representing a resurgent nationalism, and though they were not strong enough to build permanently, they were capable of destroying the empire of the Moghuls. They were successful for a time but they looked too much to the past and thought in terms of reviving it. They did not realize that much had happened which they could not ignore or pass by, that the past can never take the place of the present, that even that present in India of their day was one of stagnation and decay. It had lost touch with the changing world and left India far behind. They did not appreciate that a new and vital world was arising in the West, based on a new outlook and on new techniques, and a new power, the British, represented that new world of which they were so ignorant. The British triumphed, but hardly had they established themselves in the North when the great Mutiny broke out and developed into a war of independence, and nearly put an end to British rule. The urge to freedom, to independence, has always been there, and the refusal to submit to alien domination.

(Nehru)

2. MUSLIM RULE IN INDIA WAS NOT FOREIGN

India was practically independent up to the beginning of the thirteenth century A.D. By independent, I mean that no foreign rule had been imposed upon it from without. Some parts of the North-western Provinces, of the Punjab and Sindh has been for some time under Muslim domination, but the main territory was under native rulers and native laws. As said before, the tribes that overran the north-western parts of India between the invasion of Alexander the Great and that of Abul Qasim, to settle. Once settled there, they adopted the religion and the social life of the country and were merged with the people of the soil. Thenceforth there was no distinction between them and the other Indian people.

Muslim Rule in India was not foreign. It is not right to say that the Muslim rule in India was a 'foreign rule." The Muslim invaders were no doubt foreign in their origin (just as the Normans and Danes were when they came to England), but as soon as they had settled in India, they adopted the country, made it their home, married and raised children there, and became the sons of the soil. Akbar and Aurangzeb were as much Indians, as are to-day the Moghuls and Pathans in Delhi or elsewhere. Sher Shah and Ibrahim Lodi were no more foreigners in India than were the descendants of William the Conqueror or the successors of William of Orange in Great Britain. When Timur and Nadir Shah and Ahmed Shah Abdali attacked India, they attacked a kingdom which was ruled by Indian Muslims. They were as much the enemies of the Muhammedan rulers of India as of the Hindus. The Muslims, who exercised political sovereignty in India from the thirteenth up to the middle of the nineteenth century A.D., were Indians by birth, Indians by marriage and Indians by death. They were born in India they married there, there they died, and there they were buried. Every penny of the revenues they raised in India was spent in India. Their army was wholly Indian. They allowed new families from beyond the borders of Hindustan to come and settle in India, but they very rarely, if at all, employed people who were not willing to stay in India for good and to make it their home. Their bias, if any against the Hindus was religious, not political. The converts to Islam were sometimes treated with greater consideration than even the original Muslims. Akbar of course, did away with that distinction but even the most bigoted and the most orthodox, Muhammedan ruler of India was not possessed of that kind of social pride and exclusiveness which distinguishes the British ruler of India to-day. If the racial question ever came into prominence during Mohammedan supremacy in India, it was not between Hindus and Muhammedans, but between Muhammedans and Mohammedans, as for instance between Tuglaks and Pathans, or between Moghuls and Lodis.

In the reign of rulers like Sher Shah., Akbar, Jehangir and Shah Jahan, the Hindus were eligible for the highest offices under the crown next after the princes of royal blood. They were governors of provinces, generals of armies and rulers of districts and divisions. In short, the distinctions between the Hindus and Muslims were neither political nor social. Looked at from the economic point of view, the Government was as much indigenous as under Hindu rule. The Muslims never attempted to disarm the population nor they prohibited the manufacture or import of arms. They did not recruit their servants from Arabia, or Persia, or Afghanistan. They had no Lancashire industries to protect, and were under no necessity of imposing excise duties on Indian-made goods. They brought their own language and literature with them. For a time, perhaps, they transacted all government business through that language, but eventually they evolved a language which is as much Indian as any other vernacular spoken in India to-day. The ground work of this language, which is now called Urdu or Hindustani, is purely Indian. The Muslim rulers of India had no anxiety for, and were in no way concerned with the prosperity of the labouring classes of Persia or Afghanistan. If anyone sought their patronage he had to come to and settle in India.

History does not record a single instance of India being ruled from without, by a people of purely non-Indian blood and in the interests of another country and another people. Before the British, India was always an empire by herself. She was never a part of another empire much less a dependency. She had her own army her own navy, her own flag. Her revenues were spent for her own benifit. She had industries and manufactured the goods she consumed. Anyone wanting the previlege of trading with India under special term had to obtain the sanction of her government, as the East India Company did. There was no India Office in Arabia or in Persia or in Kabul to which the people of India looked for initiative in the affairs of their native land.

(*Lajpatrai : Young India*)

THE DOCTRINE OF THE SWORD.

I do believe that when there is only a choice between cowardice and volence, I would advice violence.....I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she should in a cowardly manner become or remain a helpless victim to her own dishonour. But I believe that non-viclence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness is more manly than punishment.

Forgiveness adorns a soldier. But abstinence is forgiveness only when there is power to punish; it is meaningless when it pretends a to proceed from a helpless creature. A mouse hardly forgives a cat when it allows itself to be torn to pieces by her.....But I do not believe India to be helpless, I do not believe myself to be a helpless creature.....

Let me not be misunderstood. Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will.....

I am not a visionary. I claim to be a practical idealist. The religion of non-viclence it not meant merely for the Rishis and saints It is meant for the common people as well. Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute. The spirit lies dormant in the brute and he knows no law but that of physical might. The dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law-to the strength of the spirit.

I have therefore ventured to place before India the ancient law of self-sacrifice. For Satyagrah and its off-shoots, non-co-operation and civil resistance, are nothing but new names for the law of suffering. The Rishis who discovered the law of non-violence in the midst of violence, were greater geniuses than Newton. They were themselves greater warriors than Wellington. Having themselves known the use of arms, they realised their uselessness and taught a weary world that its salvation lay not through violence but through non-violence.

Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means the putting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant. Working under this law of our being, it is possible for a single individual to defy the whole might of an unjust empire to save his honour, his religion, his soul and lay the foundation for that empire's fall or its regeneration.

And so I am not pleading for India to practise non-violence because it is weak. I want her to practise non-violence being conscious of her strength and power.....I want India to recognise that she has a soul that cannot perish, and that can rise triumphant above any physical weakness and defy the physical combination of a whole world.....

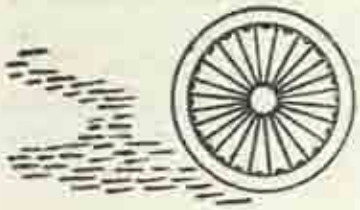
I isolate this non-co-operation from Sinn Feinism, for, it is so conceived as to be incapable of being offered side by side with violence. But I invite even the school of violence to give this peaceful non-co-operation a trial. It will not fail through its inherent weakness. It may fail because of poverty of response. Then will be the time for real danger. The high-souled men, who are unable to suffer national humiliation any longer, will want to vent their wrath. They will take to violence. So far as I know, they must perish without delivering themselves or their country from the wrong. If India takes up the doctrine of the sword, she may gain momentary victory. Then India will cease to be the pride of my heart. I am wedded to India because I owe my all to her. I believe absolutely that she has a mission for the world.

(Gandhiji)



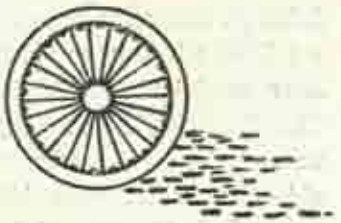
BOOK II

INDIA IN BONDAGE



CHAPTER VIII

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BRITISH RULE IN INDIA



1. SCOPE OF THIS BOOK.

THE Period of British rule in our history provides the immediate back-ground of our time. While the remoter past is only a memory and inspiration, this period is intimately bound up with our lives and lives of our fathers. The situation and problems that face us to day has to be understood in their genesis and dealt with adequately only if we understand the role of British rule in the last two centuries. Thus:

> "Nearly all our major problems today have grown up during British rule and as a direct result of British policy: the princes: the minority problem: various vested interests, foreign and Indian; the lack of Industry and the neglect of agriculture: the extreme backwardness in the social services; and, above all, the tragic poverty of the people."
>
> (*Nehru: Discovery of India*)

It is not our purpose to follow in any detail the chronicle of British Rule in India. A true history of this period has still to be pieced together and perhaps the National Government might undertake it—by traversing 13 miles of National Archives, and many other record rooms. Our purpose is to give some account of the forces, that have reduced India to what it is today. The object is not to rake up the past and present a charter of grievances against the British, but to provide a better understanding of our problems. This history provides a lesson for us and for the British—or any other Imperialist power, of the effects of the 'glory' of an Empire in terms of human suffering and degradation. In the realisation of this lesson lies the understanding and friendship that India desires today with England.

The effects on India of British Rule—and incidently of the impact of the West—has been deep and many sided in political subjection, socially, morally and most of all in the economic sphere. A balance sheet attempted in these pages shall, we are afraid, show the role of British Imperialism—as of any imperialism, as highly destructive.

The economic exploitation that the country has suffered and the state of utter penury to which it has been progressively reduced has been the clamourous theme of writers and politicians since the days of Dadabhai Naroaji, and R. C. Dutta down to the present economists. They have provided the national movement with its motive force, goal and programme, all through. Our account is taken mostly from the admirable factual and analytical presentation given by Mr. Rajani Palme Dutt in his book "India Today."[1]

2. A SUMMARY OF BRITISH PERIOD

In 1498, Vascodegama discovered the Sea-route to India and a naval Europeon power, the Portuguese came to India for the first time. The

Zemorin of Calicut gave Vascodegama shelter and permission for trade. Later Alphonso de Albuquerque conquered Goa in 1510 and set out to build a commercial empire.

The English arrived on the scene at the end of the 17th century and were followed by the French a little later. By 1613 the Emperor Jahangir had granted permission to the English to establish a factory in Surat. Other factories were later established in Madras, Bengal and Bombay. The East India Company constituted mostly by unscrupulous adventurers, had came with the object of trade. The idea of acquiring political power in India came with the conflict between the British and the French in India. Both gave support to rival candidates for the throne of the Carnatic; Robert Clive's candidate triumphed over that of Dupliex. Not only was the British puppet Nawab installed but the English became a strong political force. They had discovered their superiority in the technique of warfare against the undisciplined forces of the Indian States. They had also discovered a method by which political power could be won through puppet Kings.

The British had also established themselves in the city of Calcutta in Bengal. A quarrel arose between the Company and Siraj-ud-Dowla the Nawab of Bengal about the fortifications that the Company was erecting in Calcutta. The result was a battle-called the Battle of Palassey-in 1756. The Nawab was betrayed and defeated. The Company now became the Zamindars of the 24 Purganas nearly 900 square miles of territory and also the ruling power behind the rulers in Bengal. In these circumstances of irresponsible and unscrupulous power, the Company subjected the country to an unparalleled organised loot, from 1757 to 1772.

In 1764 the Company's forces defeated the Moghul troops at Buxar and Clive who had already assumed the title of Governor of Bengal obtained from the Emperor the *Dewani* of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The East India Company thus became the sovereign power. The State that Clive founded and ruled for seven years was nothing more than a gangster State and at no time in Indian history had any part of it suffered so greatly as the people of Bengal did in these years.

The British Government in England later began to take part in the situation in India. Warren Hastings was made the Governor General in Bengal in 1774 and the fight for expansion of British supremacy began. Large areas were annexed under one pretext or another. There was a tussle at this time between the French and the British for supremacy. Indian powers were represented by the Marhattas, the Nizam and Hyder Ali.

Between 1778 and 1819, the British fought three wars with the Marhattas and large tracts of central and Western India ware annexed. The Nizam, Peshawa, Scindia, Holkar, Bonsle and Mysore, Tanjore, Carnatic and Surat all fell victim to the British policy of expansion. Hyder Ali and his son Tipu put up a very stubborn fight and became the rallying point of opposition to the British. Hyder Ali died in 1782 and Tipu fell fighting in Seringapatam in 1799.

A succession of Governor Generals, Wellessly, Wellington, Lord Hastings carried the work of Warren Hastings further. All the states were forced to give-in to the "subsidiary system" or British over-lordship. In 1843 Sind was annexed on an extremely flimsy pretext followed by the annexation of Punjab in 1849. The whole of India was now under British rule except a few 'islands' here and there. Dalhousie undertook the policy of annexation of the remaining states either by force or on some pretext. By the novel doctrine of 'lapse' States without male heirs were to become the Companys' property. Sartara, Sambalpur, Nagpur, Karachi and Jhansi were annexed on this ground. Oudh was annexed on the ground that the ruler was incompetent.

The discontent against the British broke out into a conflagration in 1857. Four Indian regiments at Meerut mutinied and shot down their British officers on the 9th May. The Mutiny developed into a wide-spread uprising and produced some

1. India Today (Peoples Publishing House, Bombay) R. Palme Dutt

remarkable leaders like Nana Sahib, Tantia Tope, Lakshmibai of Jhansi, Quazimullah Khan, Kumar Singh and Maulvi Ahmed Shah. The forces of the national revolutionaries failed ultimately and the rebels were put down with a heavy hand.

In 1858, the Crown took over the Government of India from the East India Company. A new policy was introduced by the British to establish vested interests and a feudal conservative order that would support British rule. The economic exploitation of India took subtler forms but a renaissance and resistance also took birth from this very condition. By the end of the 19th century political consciousness in the country acquired a shape and voice and grew more powerful year after year.

3. INDIA BECOMES FOR THE FIRST TIME A POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC APPENDAGE OF ANOTHER COUNTYR

The establishment of British rule in India was an entirely novel phenomenon for her, not comparable with any other invasion or political or economic change. 'India had been conquared before, but by invaders who settled within her frontiers and made themselves part of her life. (Like the Normans in England or the Manchus in China) 'She had never lost her independence, never been enslaved. That is to say, she had never been drawn into a political and economic system whose centre of gravity lay outside her soil, never been subjected to a ruling class which was and which remained permanently alien in origin and character.' (Shelvankar). Every previous ruling class, whether it had originally come from outside or was indigenous, had accepted the structural unity of India's social and economic lifeand tried to fit into it. It had become Indianized and had struck roots in the soil of the country. The new rulers were entirely different, with their base elsewhere, and between them and het average Indian there was a vast and unbridgeable gulf—s difference in tradition in outlook, in income and ways of living. The early Britishers in India rather cut off from England, adpted many Indian ways of living. But this was a supreficial approach and even this wss deliberately abandoned with the improvement in communications between India and England. It was felt that the British ruling class must maintain its prestige in India by keeping aloof, exclusive, apart from Indians, living in a superior world of its own. There were two worlds: the world of British officials and the world of India's millions, and there was nothing in common between them except a common dislike for each other. Previously races had marged into one another or atleast fitted into an organically interdependent structure. Now racialism became the acknowledged cread and this was intensified by the fact that the dominant race had both political and economic power, without check or hindrance.

(Nehru).



4. WHILE INDIA LOST HER FREEDOM

While the British Power was establishing itself in India a tide of Freedom was sweeping over the world, how India would have fared if at this critical period of world history she had been free to receive and be influenced by the ideas of this contemporary world is a matter for sad thoughts.

Two momentous events, that changed the history of mankind took place at this time.

The first was the American Declation of Independence in 1776. Not only was the great Republic of America was born out of 13 small, discordant, backward states, but a new era for democracy and freedom, for a new level and tempo in progress of mankind was opened. In America itself "A stirring period of awakening and intellectual and economic activity followed, Free America, rid of feudal relics and foreign control, marched ahead with great strides."

The second was the French Revolution in 1789. "In France the great Revolution smashed the Bastille, symbol of the old order and swept away the king and feudalism and declared the Rights of man to the world." It was a gigantic effort of the common man against monarchies, feudal lords and religious prosecution and the obsoloscent and unjust order. Though the Revolution remained unfulfilled at the time, its influence worked long and wide. It was the dawn that brought the abolition of slavery, the democratic Governments and the modern Socialism.

"The Independence of the United States of America is more or less contemporaneous with the loss of freedom by India. Surveying the past century and a half, an Indian looks somewhat wistfully and longingly at the vast progress made by the United States during this period and compares it with what has been done and what has not been done in his own country. It is true no doubt that America offered a virgin field and almost clean slate to write upon while we were cluttered up with ancient memories and traditions. And yet perhaps it is not inconcievable that if British had not undertaken this great burden in India and, as she tells us, endeavoured for so long to teach us the difficult art of self-government, of which we have been so ignorant, India might not only have been freer and more prosperous but also far more advanced in science and art and all that makes life worth living." (*Nehru*)



A PICTURE OF INDIA'S WEALTH & POVERTY

I. THE ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF INDIA AT THE BEGINNING OF BRITISH RULE.

CHAPTER IX.



WHAT was the economic background of India when all these far reaching political changes were taking place? V. Anstey has written that right up to the eighteenth century 'Indian methods of production and of industrial and commercial organization could stand comparison with those in vouge in any other part of the world'. India was a highly developed manufacturing country exporting her manufactured products to Europe and other countries. Her banking system was efficient and well organized throughout the country, and the Hundis or bills of exchange issued by the great business or financial houses were honoured every-where in India, as well as in Iran, and Kabul and Herat and Tashkent and other places in Central Asia. Merchant capital had evolved and there was an elaborate network of agents, jobbers, brokers and middlemen. The shipbuilding industry was flourshing and one of the flagships of an English admiral during the Napoleonic wars had been built by an Indian firm in India. India was, in fact, as advanced industrially, commercially and finaucially as any country prior to the Industrial Revolution. No such development could have taken place unless the country had enjoyed long periods of stable and peaceful government and the highways were safe for traffic and trade.

.....

Clive described Murshidabad in Bengal in 1757, the very year of Palassey, as a city 'as extensive, populous, and rich as the city of London with this difference that there are individuals in the first possessing infinitely greater property than in the last'. The city of Dacca in eastern Bengal was famous for its fine muslins. These two cities, important as they were, were near the periphery of Hindusthana. All over the vast land there were greater cities and large numbers of big manufacturing and trading centres, and a very rapid and ingenious system of communicating news and market prices had been evolved. The great business houses often received news, even of the wars that were going on, long before despatches reached the officials of the East India Company.

The economy of India had thus advanced to as high a stage as it could reach prior to the Industrial Revolution. Whether it had the seeds of further progress in it or was too much bound up with the rigid social structure, it is difficult to say. It seems quite possible, however, that under normal conditions it would have undergone that change and begun to adapt itself, in its own way, to the new industrial conditions. And yet, though it was ripe for a change, that change itself required a revolution within its own framework. Perhaps some catalytic agent was necessary to bring that change. It is clear that howsoever highly organized and developed its pre-industrial economy was, it could not compete for long with the products of industrialized countries. It had to industrialize itself or submit to foreign eco-

nomic penetration which would have led to political interference.

.....

Though the Indian merchant and manufacturing classes were rich and spread out all over the country, and even controlled the economic structure, they had no political power. Government was despotic and still largely feudal. In fact, it was probably more feudal than it had been at some previous stages of Indian history. Hence there was no middleclass strong enough, or even consciously thinking of seizing power, as in some western countries. The people generally had grown apathetic and servile. There was thus a gap which had to be filled before any revolutionary change could take place. Perhaps this gap had been produced by the static nature of Indian society which refused to change in a changing world, for every civilization which resists change declines. The society, as constituted, had no more creative part to play. A change was overdue.

.....

As it happened, foreign political domination came first and this led to a rapid destruction of the economy she had built up, without anything positive or constructive taking its place.

(Nehru.)

2. POTENTIAL WEALTH OF INDIA.

India one of the poorest countries of the world is one of its richest in natural resources and manpower, and potentialities for industrial development.

India posseses a population of 400 million, nearly one-fifth of the entire world's population. This population, when given equal opportunity has proved itself inferior to none in the world, in industry, intelligence and thrift. Indian labourer has shown his quality in America, Canada, Africa and Asiatic countries. It was Indian labour, which in the main cleared and colonised Africa, Malaya and other places for the British and Dutch Empires. Indian workmen still show skill of hand and aesthitic sense of a high degree in such old arts and crafts of India in towns and villages as have survived the machine-age and the British onslaught.

In modern industry also the Indian mechanic and workmen, often illiterate has shown a dexterity and precision that is remarkable. During the last war, the adaptation of Indian workshops and factories to the production of armament and other paraphernalia of war, rapidly and with little resources, was phenominal. The Indian soldier-even without the patriotic motive-has shown his mettle and high quality in modern warfare on all fronts and is well recognised by the world.

The geographical position of India on the globe is of great strategical advantage in commerce and for peace between the world of the East and the West. Under more favourable circumstances India can once again become the life-line and hub of international commerce of a rich hinterland, China, Japan, and rich Pacific Islands and Burma in the East, Australia on the South east, Iran, Iraq and Africa on the West, and the developing Soviet States of Central Asia on the North.

India has an area of nearly 2,000,000 square miles, equal to that of whole Europe, minus Russia. Twenty-five Englands would go to make one India. This huge area has been, for countless centuries, the single undivided home of the Indian people though it stands divided to-day-we belive-temporarily.

Nearly three-quarters of the surface of our land is capable of growing something or other. There are 150,000,000 acres of land that is cultivable but lies waste in, what was, British India alone, and these can give at least one more acre of tillage to one man, who now has an average of 3'3 per acre available. The hitherto low productivity in agriculture makes for greater production with better watersupply and finances needed for seed, manure and machinery. The following quotation will bear the potentiality of agriculture.

1. Discovery of India by Jawaharlal Nehru.

"It seems safe to affirm that with the extension of irrigation, more thorough and complete facilities of transport, improvements in methods and materials of agriculture and the expansion of the area of cultivation.....the productiveness of India might easily be increased by at least 50%. Indeed, few countries in the world can be said to possess so brilliant an agricultural prospect, if judged of purely by intrinsic value and extent of undeveloped resources." (Sir George Watt, "Memorandum on the Resources of British India" 1894, P. 5.)

India posses 180 million of cattle i. e., nearly one third of the worlds total.

India forests produce a rich variety of high quality timber and other industrial raw material. They are capable of supplying 100 million tons of wood every year without suffering any depletion.

India has been a rich source of supply of raw materials of various kinds that have fed the machines in England and other countries. The export of raw materials in 1939 after meeting all internal requirements was worth over Rs. 3,000,000,000.

The most striking wealth of India is its mineral resources, which, with power, form the basis of industrial development. There is an abundant supply of coal and iron of very high grade and what is more they are found in contiguous masses. It has been estimated that in the quadrangle of which Calcutta is the north-east corner and lying 400 miles west and 200 miles south from that city, there are 20,000 million tons of high grade ore at an average distance of 125 miles from Bengal coal fields.

During the last war, the United States Government anxious to develop the India war base against Japan sent the American Tchnical Mission in 1942 to investigate India's resources and recommend ways and means by which U. S. A. could assist in augmenting India's war Production. It is interesting to not thate the British Goverment branded this report as strictly confidential and neither published, nor implemented its recommendations. The Mission reported:

"The coal resources in Bengal and Bihar have been estimated at 60 million tons of which 20 million are considered workable. And reserves in the Central Provinces and Berar have been estimated at 17 million tons, of which 5, 150 million are considered workable. In addition there are coal resources ranging from 60 million to 80 million tons in the Langrin Plateau of Assam and 70 million tons in Nongstoin. Reserves of coal suitable for the manufacture of matallurgical coke have been estimated at 500 million tons of which approximately one half will be lost in the process of mining under existing methods: these reserves are being consumed at the annual rate of 15 million tons, and are being used largely for purposes other than the manufacture of coke. Should the reserves of coal suitable for coke be developed exclusively to that purpose, they would last for many years, even though the production of iron and steel should be greatly increased."

The iron-ore deposits are even more important. According to Cecil Jones, of the Geological survey of India, at an conservative estimate, these deposits amount to 3,000 million tons and are second only to the United States and France. The quality of this ore is of the highest grade. As it is, the average production of iron in India as compared with the average in United States, Great Britain Russia, Germany, Sweden and Spain was only 11% of what it should be 89% might be regarded as wasted.

According to the American Techinal Mission:

"The reserves of the iron ore in India are probably the largest in the world and are superior in quality to those of any other country. In the Singhbum District alone, the reserves of the iron ore with an iron content in excess of 60 per cent are estimated at not less than 3,000 million tons and may amount to as much as 20,000 million tons. In Bastar State the reserves are estimated at 724,000,000 tons of high quality ore. There are

also important deposits in neighbouring districts of the Central Provinces one of which, in the Rajhara Hills, is estimated to contain 2,500,000 tons of ore with 67½ per cent iron content. India also possesses rich supply of manganese, gold, lead, silver, copper and bauxite. The American Technical Mission's estimate of India's bauxite deposits is at about 250,000,000 tons. India has about 30% of the world's output of manganese ore, three fourths of the world's supply of sheet and block mica, and is the world's largest producer of lac.

In respect of oil, the supply developed was mostly in Burma, which was separated, largely on account of this oil from the growingly turbulent country of India. The powerful oil interests as also other British mining concerns have been known to deliberately prevent competition and development of new wells and mines. But there is evidence of abundant untapped resources of oil in India.

The Geological survey of India who carries the underground survey in India, had been provided with neither the funds nor the equipment for prospecting for industrial exploitation of India's mineral wealth.

Even more important are the potentialities of water power both for irrigation and electrification of India. That these potentialities have been totally neglected and now constitutes the basis of a new era in India's industrial development will be evident from the following table:

WATER POWER RESOURCES

In million horse-powers

	Potential	Developed	Percentage Developed
United States	35.0	11.7	33
Canada ...	18.2	4.5	25
France ...	5.4	2.1	37
Japan ...	4.5	1.7	37
Italy —	3.8	1.8	47
Switzerland	2.5	1.8	72
Germany —	2.0	1.1	55
India ...	27.0	0.8	3

India stands second only to the United States in water power resources yet uses only 3 per cent compared to 72 per cent in Switzerland, 55 per cent in Germany, 47 per cent in Italy 37 per cent in France and Japan and 33 per cent in the United States.

Already blue prints and activity in India have started for projects that exceed the T.V.A. in magnitude.

3. THE POVERTY OF INDIA

The most important fact about India as she has emerged from the Imperial domination is her colossal poverty. The average income per head of the Indian has been estimated variously from the time of Dadubhai Naroji to the present time. The following table gives these various estimates :—

Estimated By	Official or Unofficial	Year When Made	Relating to Year	Annual Income Per Head. Rs.	Sh.
D. Naroji	Unofficial	1876	1868	20	40
Baring and Barbour ...	Official	1882	1881	27	45
Lord Curzon	Official	1901	1897-98	30	40
W. Digby	Unofficial	1902	1899	18	24
Findlay Shirras	Official	1924	1911	49	65
Wadia and Joshi — ...	Unofficial	1925	1913-14	44½	59
Shah and Khambata ...	Unofficial	1924	1921-22	74	95
Simon Report	Official	1930	1921-22	116	155

Estimated By	Official or Unofficial	Year When Made	Relating to Year	Annual Income Per Head. Rs.	Sh.
V. K. R. V. Rao	Unofficial	1939	1925-29	78	117
Central Banking Enquiry Committee (Agricultural)	Official	1931	1928	42	63
Findlay Shirras	Official	1932	1931	63	94½
Sir James Grigg	Official	1938-38	1937-38	56	84
V. K. R. V. Rao	Unofficial	1940-32	1931-32	62	93

Thus even according to the "most optimistic" estimate India's capita income comes to 5d per day.

In his illuminating analysis of these figures Mr Rajani Palme Dutt has shown how the figures of the Simon Report are fallacious, on this as on other matters. The latest and most authentic official figure for a year is a gross average of Rs. 56 per head. Applying the statistics of division of income to this figure (that is 60% of the population sharing 30% of the income) *we get a figure of about 1½d per head per day for the majority of India's population.* These figures give a measure of the depth of Indian poverty.

We have to see what these figure mean in living conditions.

The leading Indian economists Shah and Khambata express it as follows:

"The average Indian income is just enough either to feed two men in every three of the population, or give them all two in place of every three meals they need, on condition that they all consent to go naked, live out of doors all the year round, and have not any amusement or recreation, and want nothing else but food, and that the lowest and coarsest and least nutritious."

(Shah and Khambata: "The wealth and taxable capacity of India," 1924 p. 253.)

Official enquiry into the working class budgets in Bombay reveal that the workers' standard of living was lower than even that of the Jail code, and Famine code. And the Bombay workers are much better off than most of the rural population. The Government reports reveal the same picture from year to year. "the large proportion of inhabitants in India are still beset with poverty of a kind which finds no parallel in Western lands, and are living on the very margin of subsistence. (India in 1929-30). The effect of this poverty in malnutrition and ill health is evident. According to the official medical authorities nearly two thirds of the people are under-nourished prepetually.

"Of all the disabilities from which the masses in India suffer malnutrition is perhaps the chief..... Malnutrition is the most far-reaching of the causes of diseases in India."

(Lt. Col. R. MacHarrison, "Memorandum on Malnutrition as a cause of Physical Inefficiency and ill health among the Masses in India." Evidence to the Royal commission on Agriculture, III, p. 95)

Government enquiries into the condition of labour in India reveal the same picture of semi-starvation repeatedly.

In respect of housing the average working class family does not even enjoy one room. In 1911, 69% of the total population in Bombay were living in one room tenements averaging 4.5 persons per tenement. In 1931 census 74% of the population of Bombay were living in one room tenements. Overcrowding was increased in this way, by decades of progress. Karachi and Ahmedabad were even more overcrowded than Bombay. These conditions have become worse since 1931 and much worse since the war, and the condition of the chawls and

roadside huts in Bombay have to be seen to be believed.

The effects of these conditions of semi-starvation, overcrowding, lack of sanitation on health and vital statistics can well be imagined.

The death rate per thousand is about double that of England. The expectation of life for an Indian is less than half that of an inhabitant of England and Wales. The maternal mortality rate is of 24-5 per thousand live births as compared with 4.1 in England and Wales.

Mr. V Anstey, a standard authority on Indian economics, estimates that three deaths in four in India are due to deaths due to poverty.

The villages in India give a picture of poverty and misery of the lowest level in the world.

And this state of poverty has been growing and becoming worse and worse with growing agrarian crisis under the condition of Imperialist rule.

The basic problem of poverty of Indian masses has stood in the way of all attempts at social service and reform such as medical aid, education, co-operative effort, improvements in agricultural or cottage industry.

The political struggle in India had to recognise this fact and measures for adding to the villager's income even by a small jot were to be included in the programme.

This terrible and shameful state of the people has been explained by the apologists of the Imperial rule in various ways. Thus natural phenomena of geography and climate, exhausted soil, inherent social backwardness of Indians, laziness, extravagance and superstition of the masses, caste, posit on of women, cow worship, unhygenic habits : all these are given as the causes of India's poverty. It is forgotten that the social backwardness is rather the consequence of the low economic level and political subjection and not vice-versa.

The most often repeated explanation is 'Overpopulation.' This has been constantly repeated and has come to be believed generally and even by learned economists. Mr. Palme Dutt has dealt with this question at length in his book, India Today, and revealed that this theory of overpopulation is totally false. The general belief, that, there has been enormously rapid increase of population under British rule, exceeding far beyond the rate of increase of other countries is exactly opposite to the facts of history. The actual rate of increase of the population of India under British rule was markedly less than that of any European country and is even less than the general scale of world increase. This applies equally to the period as a whole of British rule and of the last half century.

The comparitive table of increase of population of India and other Western countries reveals the interesting picture that with the exception of France the rate of growth in India was less than that of any European country. From 1970 to 1910 India had an increase of about 19% while England and Wales had an increase of 58%. From 1872-1931 increase in India was 36% and in England and Wales 77%. The rate of increase in England and Wales for the last sixty years has been more than double that of India.

Is is also not a fact that the growth of population has outstripped the growth of the volume of food production and the constant state of famine in India cannot be explained by over-population. Despite the culpable neglect of agricultural development and only partial use of cultivable land, the available figures up to the present indicate the contrary. The rate of growth of food production has upto the present not been outstripped by the rate of growth of population.

"Between 1900 and 1930 population in India increased by 18 per cent, but production of food stuffs and raw materials increased by about 30 per cent, and industrial production by 18.9 per cent. During the decade 1921-1930 population has indeed made a leap forward; but production has also kept pace..... such progress has been kept subsequently in spite of the trade depression; the index of industrial production has stood at 144 in 1934-35 and may be higher in the current year.'

"All this indicates that population has not outstripped production.....the alarm about population outstripping production is not supported by statistics. Those who are alarmed about the devastating torrent of babies in India will do well to direct their attention to improvements in the distribution of national income, in the quality of consumption, and in the geographical distribution of population, and to other allied matters. (Professor D. J. Thomas, in *The Times*, October 24 1935)

The root cause of poverty must be sought elsewhere. The difference between India and the European countries is not in the rate of growth of population but is due to the fact that economic development and expansion has been made stagnant in British India, driving an increasing proportion of the populations to a primitive and overburdened agriculture.

Wealth of the country has been constantly drained away and industrial and other outlets have been thwarted. Even agriculture, which is its sole source of subsistence, has been placed in crippling conditions and neglect.

It is not in any natural phenomena or racial character of the people that the causes of poverty are to be sought. Nor do they lie in a mythical state of overpopulation. It is in the social economic conditions under Imperialist rule that the secret of Indian proverty lies. In the succeeding chapter we shall examine the development of these social and political circumstances.

(from R. Palme Dutta)

4. A CONTRAST OF TWO WORLDS

Two Decades of Socialism and of Imperialism.

The experience of the modern period has enlarged the horizon of the possibilities of rapid transformation even under the most backward conditions. The example of the revival and regeneration of Turkey since the war is instructive in this respect, and has its important lessons for India. But especially the experience of the achievement of the socialist revolution in the Soviet Union during these two decades, operating in a vast country of initially backward technique, extreme disorganisation and a largely illiterate population, and uniting European and Asiatic peoples, affords a practical demonstration of what can be done, which is opening the eyes of the peoples of all countries, and not least of the people of India. It will be useful to pursue this comparasion both for the light it throws on the present stagnant position of India in contrast with an advancing community, and for the hopeful indication it holds out of what can be achieved, given the appropriate social and political conditions.

It so happened that the completion of the twentieth year of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1937 fell in the same year which saw the completion of the one hundred and eightieth year of the British rule in India, if this is dated from the conventional starting point of the Battle of Plassey. Imperialism has thus had nine times as long in India to show what it can accomplish as socialism has had in Russia.

Vital as have been the differences in the precedent conditions of these two vast territories (especially the differences between an independent imperialist country and a colonial country), there are nevertheless certain features of analogy in the situation inherited on either side.....the overwhelming illiterate and backward peasant majority of the population, the immensity of the territory inhabited by a series of races and nationalities at differing stages of civilisation, the rich natural resources relatively undeveloped, the traditions of despotic rule with no experience of democratic forms save for a decomposing village system, which make it tempting to compare what imperialisim has made of India in 180 years and what socialism has made of Russia in twenty years.

In the Soviet Union the index of industrial production (of large scale industry) rose from 100 in 1913 to 816.4 in 1937 an eight fold increase. The national income rose from 21 thousand million roubles (at 1926-27 prices) in 1913 to 96 thousand million roubles in 1937, a four and a half times increase.

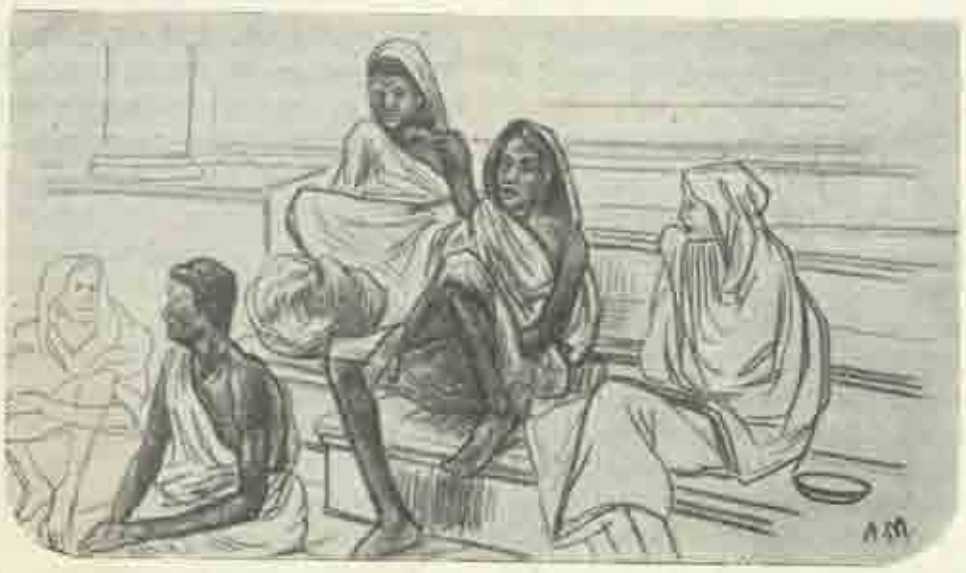
For India it is significant at the outset that there is not an attempt be made at any general

statistics or index of industrial production, or of gross national output or income. An unnofficial estimate made by D. B. Meek in April 1936 for an index of industrial production in the main industries showed that on the basis of 100 for the average of five years 1910-11 to 1914-15, of 156 for 1922-23 an increase of 56 percent, or one sixteenth the rate of the Soviet increase from a much lower initial point.

The poverty stricken land hungry peasantry of Tsarist Russia, at the mercy of the landlords, the money lauders and the kuluks, have become free and prosperous collective peasantry of to-day, cultivating their large-scale collective farms with the most advanced machinery and technique of any country in the world, and already trebling their money income in the first five years since the completion of collectivisation.

In India the agrarian crisis becomes every year more threatening: the combined pressure of the landlords, the moneylenders and the Government is pauperising the peasantry and expropriating growing numbers from the land; and while the increase of the sown area and of the volume of crops has only barely exceeded the growth of population, in the last few years there are ominious signs of an absolute recession.





CHAPTER X

ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION UNDER BRITISH RULE

I. THE LOOT AND THE MODUS OPERANDI

BY

DR. J. C. KUMARAPPA

IT is instructive to look back on the history of financial obligations in India over the two centuries of British occupation. It will show that the greatness of Great Britain is largely rooted in the poverty of millions of India.

Since the days of Plassey, as Macaulay put it: "The shower of wealth fell copiously on the Company and its servants." It is continuing to do so on the British Empire even to this day: only the external garb differs according to the genius of the person in charge for the moment. It is interesting to examine these cloaks and raise them up for an instant to get a peep at the freebooter inside. We may classify the various methods used according to function they were calculated to perform.

THE HOLD UP METHOD

Again, in his 'Essay on Lord Clive' Macaulay says: "A sum of eight hundred thousand pounds sterling, in coined silver, was sent down the river from Moorshidabad to Fort William Trade revival and signs of affluence appeared in every English house. As to Clive, there was no limit to his acquisition but his own moderation." This flood of ill-gotten wealth from India supplied the cheap capital needed for the early industrial revolution of Great Britain, which gave her a place in the vanguard of industrialised nations.

Brooks Adams in his 'Law of Civilization and Decay' says: 'Possibly since the world began no investment has ever yielded the profit reaped from the Indian plunder because for nearly 50 years Great Britain stood without a competitor.....Thus the arrival of Bengal silver not only increased the mas of money, but stimulated its movements, for at once in 1759 the bank issued 10 and 15 pound notes, and in the country private firms poured forth a flood of paper.' Burke says that in 1750 there were not even 12 bankers' shops, while in 1790 they were to be found in every market town.

According to William Digby's computation, between Plassey and Waterloo probably about 1,000 million pounds sterling were transferred from Indian hoards to British banks. In those days under 'famine condition' 40 measures of rice were sold for a rupee, while today we get two measures a rupee, so the purchasing power of the rupee was then about twenty times as much and this gives us a standard by which to gauge the fabulous value of the

wealth taken from India under this simple method of helping oneself as the hold up gangster does.

Embezzlement

With the passing of the free lance 'empire builders' we come to the period of embezzlement by the Honourable East India Company. The Company was too honourable to take money itself openly. They resorted to buying Indian goods out of tax revenues and exporting them to Europe for sale. The tax-payer got no returns from these transactions, as the whole proceeds were taken as profits! According to the 'Minutes of Evidence on the Affairs of the East Company' the revenues so embezzled between 1793 and 1812 amounted to about 260 million pounds sterling.

Falsification of Accounts

The financial genius pervading the respectable and prosperous nineteenth century British could no longer countenance the bare-faced loot of Clive nor the commercial dishonesty of the East India Company of the earlier decades of the century. It wanted to do the same thing but by a newer and better way. It had a wonderful brain wave. Why reveal the facts of predation? Bury them in dusty ledgers which nobody will scrutinise or understand. Britain was rapidly building up the outer ramparts of her empire. This involved enormous expenditures. Why not debit these to Indian revenues? There were wars in Afghanistan, Burma, China, Persia, Abyssinia, Egypt, etc. Accordingly over 700 crores were charged in this manner to Indian revenues. Ramsay Macdonald in his lucid moment wrote in his Government of India. "Undoubtedly India has not been dealt with fairly in this respect. It has had to bear the expense of operations that have been mainly imperial." The Welby Commission report abounds in records of many other such false debits into which space does not permit us to enter here.

The Gift Method

The glaring limelights of the twentieth century cannot conceal any crooked ways from the public gaze. During World War I, Great Britain had to incur large expenditures in India which normally would have had to be paid back to India. Great Britain, like the Brahmin, is born to receive and not to pay. Have we not been taught to forgive and forget? The financial import of this is that Great Britain is entitled to forget her obligations and everybody else should forgive her indebtedness! Had not the Lord said, If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off? 'If our debts to India offend us why not write them off? echoes the British exchequer. They have an obliging department at Delhi in the Government of India, who generously will call all excess expenses a gift against which any inconvenient debits can be written off. There is precedence, even Biblical tradition for this gift method. If anything is due to the parents from the son, the Jewish custom laid down that if he says "it is corban" (a gift) from thence forward the son will be released from any futher obligation to the parents.

In this manner Great Britain shirked her liability to the extent of 189 crores. The Congress Select Committee on the Financial Obligations between Great Britain and India challenged this gift on two grounds: (1) The Government of India under the statues under which it is regulated had no power whatsoever to make a gift to Great Britain out of the revenues of India and therefore, the gifts being illegal transactions, should be returned; (2) The amount was beyond the financial ability of the people of India and India had contributed, apart from these financial 'gifts', by way of men and material far in excess of the contribution of any of the Dominions. But then, what law or order can deter Great Britain from doing what she wants? Is she not a first class World Power maintaining world security and collaborating with America, the atomic bomb-makers? Hence she is above all law. Q. E. D.

Pawnbroking Method

The last four methods afford us a historical background against which to study contemporary finance. The financing of the second world war benefited by the past experience and, therefore,

it is rich in the innovations introduced. When needy persons require purchasing power they go to a pawnshop, pledge a valuable article for a fraction of its intrinsic value and obtain the wherewithal to meet their immediate requirements. During this war the financial resources of Great Britain were greatly strained. They had to sell away thousands of millions worth of their assets. Their disinvestments reduced their credit in the outside markets. Naturally, therefore, they turned to their milch cow, India, where they can use their political stranglehold to advantage.

The framers of the Reserve Bank of India Act had conveniently provided for the forty per cent, backing of currency notes, by bullion or by sterling securities with the only condition that the bullion part is never allowed to go below 40 crores. Bullion has a recognised intrinsic value in the international market, while sterling securities, which are but Great Britain's I. O. U.'s, have no such value, specially when she is selling out her assets and speeding towards insolvency. In principle, placing these two unlikes on the same footing is a blunder, if not a financial fraud. Instead of pledging valuables, what was simpler than putting I. O. U.'s on paper in the Reserve Bank pawn shop and issuing notes limitlessly, taking out of the country as much of valuable commodities as were wanted? In this manner over 1,034 crores had been taken through inflating currency since 1939. These I. O. U.'s have been practically frozen. The 'creditor' country India is left to the tender mercies of the 'debtor' Great Britain who dictates her own terms of repayment.

Misappropriation

India possessed a certain amount of international purchasing power. These were represented by the all dollar and non-sterling assets held by Indians and certain normal trade balances in dollars and some dollar exchange arising out of American military expenses in India. These were all compulsorily taken over to the Empire Dollar Pool, which was in effect only beneficial to Great Britain. We do not know to this day the extent of this commandeered dollar finance, as the details of this are kept a close secret by the ransacker.

If this war was a war between Italo-German and Anglo-American Fascism and Great Britain was enlisting Indian soldiers to safeguard its imperial interests, it follows that the expenses of these two million odd Indian soldiers should be borne by Great Britain. Simply because these soldiers happen to be Indian their expenses do not become chargable to India any more than the police Commissioner of Bombay being a Britisher, could have his salaries charged against the British exchequer. Since 1939 such excess defence and administrative expenses amounting to nearly 2,000 crores have been debited against Indian revenues.

Besides these about 500 crores have been used to-pay off sterling debts-so-called-which were challenged by the Congress Select Committee on Financial Obligations between Great Britain and India.

These three items are definite misappropriations out of Indian financial resources. If British is capable of following ordinary commercial morality, every pie of this should be returned to India.

Misfeasance Method

Great Britain holds herself out as a trustee. She, cannot use the trust estate for her own benefit. We noted that the Indian army of two million men were recruited to save Great Britain from the heels of the Nazis. These Indian soldiers have delivered Great Britain from destruction. They therefore, deserve well of the Britishers. Under the so-called Government post-war reconstruction plans it was sought to establish these men after demobilization in Indian villages. This is robbing Peter to pay Paul. These men should be settled in Great Britain, which they saved. Failing that are there no lands in Canada and Australia where they can be profitably settled? Their lives are good enough to be risked for Great Britain, but their skins are too dark for Canada and Australia. Great

Britain loves to be generous and charitable but only at other people's expense.

Conclusion

We have wandered from the financial high priest of the East India Company-Lord Clive-to the eastwhile financial high priest of the British Empire-Lord Keynes who was of the same order We have found nothing new or elevating in their policies. Or the other hand, our classification of the method used by them seems to exhaust all the categories of crimes finincial crooks resorted to in their nefarious careers. Lord Clive was, if anything, refreshing in his adventurous exploits, though he may have lacked the 'varsity accent' of his later-day representative. Have we gained anything by the sophisticatsd, high-sounding theories put out at Baetton Woods or Dumbarton Oaks? The policy has been one of continued exploitation, shamelessly sponging on other people's resources. How can it be otherwise? This empire was conceived in avarice, fattened on loot and clothed in falsehood. The legacy of this Empire unless handled vigorously, would continue to hamper our progress for long in the economic field.

Apart from this immense drain of wealth India's productive capicity has been crushed by being made to remain a passive market for foreign goods. Every conceivable step has been taken to let India remain a mere consumer. Under these condition the wonder is not that our people are poor but that they exist at all. If we are to survive much longer it is imperative that we must shake off this octopus with its tentacles in every quarter sucking the life streams of the nation, not only by a political but a complete economic change over.

2. THREE STAGES OF ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION

(from Sri R. Palme Dutta)

It is useful to go with more detail into the history of the Imperialist exploitation of the economic life of India. Mr. Rajani Palme Dutt in his book "India To-day" has divided this into three well marked periods: 1st The period of Merchant Capital represented by the East India Company going to the end of the 18th century. 2nd The period of the Industrial Capital in the 19th century. 3rd The Modern period of Finance Capital.

The East India Company Regime

The object of the East India Company was to carry on monopolistic trade in the goods and products of India. But England had nothing of value to offer to India in return for the imports excepting a few luxury articles and precious metals. Soon however, as domination began to be established the Company was able to secure a bargain which a abandoned all pretence of equality of exchange. By 1762 the Nawab of Bengal was complaining :—

> "They forcibly take away the goods and commodities of the Ryots (peasants), merchants etc. for a fourth part of their value; and by ways of violence and oppression they oblige the Ryots, etc., to give five rupees for goods which are worth but one rupee."
>
> Nominal "trade" was thus already more plunder than trade.

With the grant of the Dewani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa in 1765 a new field of limitless direct plunder was opened up in addition to the profits of "trade". Then began a process of wholesale unashamed spoilation which has made the Company's administration during the last third of the 18th century a by-word of-history.

Of the total revenue extracted from the population about a quarter was paid to the local potentates (Nawab and Mogul) another quarter was considered sufficient for the purposes of government and the remainder half was "Clear gain".

Besides this, enormous fortunes were made by individual officers of the Company. Clive himself,

who started from nothing, returned home with a forture estimated at a quarter million pounds, in addition to an Indian estate. The real amount of the full tribute is revealed by the figure of exports and imports. During the three years 1766 to 1768, according to reports of Governor Verelst, exports amounted to £6,311,250 while imports amounted to only £624,375. Thus, ten times as much, was taken out of the country, as was sent into it, under the ruling care of this new type of Government by a merchant Company.

Effects on India

The effects of this system on the population of Bengal can be imagined. The ceaselessly renewed demand for more and yet more spoils led to the most reckless raising of the land revenue demands to heights which in many cases even meant taking the seed corn and the bullocks from the peasants. In the last year of administration of the last Indian ruler of Bengal in 1764-5, the land revenue realised was £817,000. In the first year of the Company administration in 1765-6, the land revenue realised in Bengal was £1,470,000. By 1771-2, it was £2,341,000 and 1775-6 it was £2,818,000. When Lord Cornwallis fixed the Permanent Settlement in 1793, he fixed it at £3,400,000.

All contemporary witnesses have given evidence of the rapid devastation of the country within a few years by this process, the cutting down of the population by one-third through the consequent famine, and the transformation of one-third of the country into "a jungle inhabited only by wild beasts."

By 1770 this "ruinous condition" was succeeded by a famine in Bengal which, in the Company's official report, "exceeds all description. Above one-third of the inhabitants have perished in the once plentiful province of Purneah, and in other parts the misery is equal." Ten million people were estimated to have perished in this famine. Yet the land revenue was not only rigorously collected without mercy through this famine, but was actually increased.

A decade and a half later William Fullarton, M. P., described the transformation of Bengal after twenty years of the Company's rule:

> "In former times the Bengal countries were the granary of nations and the repository of commerce, wealth and manufacture in the East.....
>
> "But such has been the restless energy of our misgovernment that within the short space of twenty years many parts of these countries have been reduced to the appearance of a desert. The fields are no longer cultivated: extensive tracts are already overgrown with thickets: the husbandman is plundered: the manufacturer oppressed famine has been repeatedly endured: and de-population has ensued."
>
> (William Fullarton, M. P., "A View of the English Interest in India," 1787).

Effect on England: The Industrial Revolution.

On the basis of the plunder of India in the second half on the 18th century Modern England was built up. In the middle of the 18th century England was still mainly agricultural.

Socially, in respect of the division of the classes, the creation of a proletariat and the establishment of secure bourgeois rule the conditions were ripe for the advance to industrial capitalism. The commercial basis had been laid. But the advance to the industrial capitalist stage required also an initial accumulation of capital on a much larger scale than was yet present in England of the middle eighteenth century.

Then in 1757 came the battle of Plassey, and the wealth of India began to flood the country in an ever-growing stream.

Immediately after, the great series of inventions began which initiated the Industrial

Revolution. In 1764 came the spinning Jenny of Hargreaves: in 1765 came Watt's steam engine, patented in 1769: in 1769 came the water frame of Arkwright, followed by his patent in 1775 for carding, drawing and spinning machines: in 1779 the mule of Crompton and in 1785 the power loom of Cartwright: and in 1788 the steam engine was applied to blast furnaces. That this series of inventions should come in a throng in this period indicates that the social conditions were ripe for their exploitation. Previous inventions had not been taken up for profitable use.

"The influx of the Indian treasure, by adding considerably to the nations' capital, not only increased its stock of energy, but added much to its flexibility and the rapidity of its movement. Very soon after Plassey, the Bengal plunder began to arrive in London, and the effect appears to have been instantaneous: for all the authorities agree that the "Industrial revolution", the event which has divided the nineteenth century from all antecedent time, began with the year 1760. Prior to 1760, according to Baines, the machinery used for spinning cotton in Lancashire was almost as simple as in India: while about 1750 the English iron industry was in full decline because of the destruction of the forests for fuel. At that time four-fifths of the iron used in the kingdom came from Sweden.

"Plassey was fought in 1757, and probably nothing has ever equalled the rapidity of the change which followed. In 1760 the flying shuttle appeared, and coal began to replace wood in smelting. In 1764 Hargreaves invented the spinning Jenny, in 1776 Crompton contrived the mule, in 1785 Cartwright patented the power loom and chief of all in 1768 Watt matured the steam engine, the most perfect of all vents of centralising energy. But though these machine served as outlets for the accelerating movement of the time, they did not cause that acceleration. In themselves inventions are passive, many of the most important having lain dormant for centuries, waiting for a sufficient store of force to have accumulated to set them working. That store must always take the shape of money, and money not hoarded, but in motion. Before the influx of the Indian treasure, and the expansion of credit which followed, no force sufficient for this purpose existed and had Watt lived fifty years earlier, he and his invention must have perished together. Possibly since the world began, no investment has ever yeilded the profit reaped form the Indian plunder, because for nearly fifty years Great Britain stood without a competitor. From 1694 to Plassey (1757) the growth had been relatively slow. Between 1760 and 1815 the growth was very rapid and prodigious." (Brooks Adams: The Law of Civilisation and Decay pp. 259-260).

Rule by Parliament, and the second phase of exploitation

But once the Industrial Revolution had been achieved in England with the aid of plunder of India, the new task became to find adequate outlets for the flood of manufactured goods.

The new needs required the creation of a free market in India in place of previous monopoly. It became necessary to transform India from an exporter of cotton goods to the whole world, into an importer of cotton goods. This meant a revolutions in the economy of India. It meant at the same time a complete change-over from the whole previous system of the East India Company. The Fox's India Bill which sought to abolish the Court of Directors and replace them by Commissioners appointed by Parliament was passed in 1784, as pitts India Act. Lord Cornwallis was sent out as Governor General and he established the Permanent Land Settlement in Pengal. The way was prepared for the new stage of exploitation by Industrial capital which was to work far deeper havoc on the economic condition, than the previous haphazzard plunder. The new aim of Imperialist rule now was the development of India as the market for the rising machine-Industry in Britain. In the time of Warren Hastings the duties on the import of cotton calicoes into Britain were 78%. On the other hand there was virtually free entry of British goods into India. Between 1814 and 1835 British cotton manufactures exported to India rose from less than 1

million yards to ocer 51 million yards. In the same period Indian cotton piece goods imported into Britain fell from one and a quarter million pieces to 306,000 pieces, and by 1844 to 63,000 pieces.

While machine made cotton goods from England ruined the waevers, machine-made twist ruined the spinners. Between 1818 and 1836 the export of cotton twist from England to India rose to 5200 times.

The same process could be traced in respect of silk goods, woolen goods, iron, pottery, glass and paper.

"Less than a hundred years ago," wrote Sir Henry Cotton in 1890, "the whole commerce of Dacca Muslin to England was estimated at one crore (ten million) of rupees, and its populations at 200,000 souls. In 1787 the export of Dacca Muslins to England amounted to 30 lakhs (three millions) of rupees. In 1817 the exports had ceased altogether. The arts of spinning and weaving, which for ages afforded employment to a numerous and industrial population, have now become extinct. Families which were formerly in a state of affluence have been driven to desert the towns and be take themselves to the villages for a livelihood ... This decadence has occured not in Dacca only, but in all districts. Not a year passes in which the Commissioners and District Officers do not bring to the notice of Government, that the manufacturing classes in all parts of the country are becoming impoverished."

Other British historians recorded the increasing and yearly decay and destruction in the cities and districts. The ruin of the textile industry was more remarkable than any other. In the 1911 Census report it was revealed that the number of textile workers was still going lower despite the gradual extesion by that time of cotton factories in India. This decrease was attributed "to the almost complete extinction of cotton spinning by hand."

It is interesting to note that the National reconstruction movement, latter, look up the restoration of textile industry as their first programme.

Similar decadence was going in the hides, skins, and metal trade. The iron and steel industry which had at one time reached a very high level in India, showed the same picture. "The native iron smelting industry has been practically stamped out by cheap inported iron and steel within range of the railways, but it still exists in the more remote parts of the Peninsula" (Imperial Gazette of India, 1907, Volume III p. 145) It was not only the old manufacturing towns and centres that were laid waste, and their population driven to crowd and over crowd the villages: it was above all the basis of the old village economy, the union of the agriculture and domestic industry, that received its mortal blow. The millions of ruined artisans and craftsmen, spinners, weavers, potters, tanners, smelters, smiths, alike from the towns and from the villages, had no alternative save to crowd into agriculture. In this way India was forcibly transformed, from being a country of combined agriculture and manfactures, in to an agricultural colony of British manufacturing goods. It is from this period of British rule and from the direct effects of British rule, that originates the deadly over-pressure on agriculture in India, which is still blandly described in official literature, as if it were a natural phenomenon of the old Indian Society, and is diagnosed by the supericial and ignorant as a symptom of "overpopulation." In fact the increase in the porportion of the population dependent on agriculture has developed under British rule, continiously extending, not only throughout the nineteenth century, but even in the twentieth century, as an examination of the census figures will show.

The British policy became clearly defined: to make India the agricultural colony of British capitalism supplying raw materials and buying manufactured goods.

One indication of the new stage of policy was the decision of 1833 to permit Englishmen to acquire land and set up as Planters in India. In that same year slavery had been abolished in the West Indies. The new plantations system which

was nothing but thinly veiled slavery, was immediately developed in India, and it is significant that many of original planters were slave drivers from the West Indies. ("Experienced planters were brought from the West Indies...The area attracted a rather rough set of planters, some of whom had been slave drivers on American soil and carried unfortunate ideas and practices with them": Buchanan, "Development of Capitalist Enterprise in India," pp. 36-7) The horrors that resulted were exposed in the Indigo commission of 1860. To-day there are more than a million workers tied to the tea, rubber, and coffee plantations, or more than the total number of workers in the textile, coal-mining, engineering, iron, and steel industries combined.

Export of Raw Metrials

The expott of raw materials leapt up, especially after 1883. Raw cotton exports rose from 9 million pounds weight in 1813 to 32 million in 1833 and 88 million pounds in 1844; sheep's wool from 3.7 thousand pounds weight in 1833 to 2.7 million in 1844; linseed from 2 100 bushels in 1833 to 237,000 in 1844. (Porter, "Progress of the Nation," 1847, p. 750.)

Between 1849 and 1914 exports of raw cotton rose from £1. 7 million in value to £22 million. In weight, raw cotton exports rose from 32 million pounds to 963 million in 1914, or thirty times over. Jute exports rose from £68,000 in 1849 to £8,6 million in 1914, or 126 time over.

Even more significant was the rising exports of food grains from starving India. The export of food grains, principally rice and wheat, rose from £858,000 in 1849 to £3.8 million by 1858, £7.9 million by 1877, £9 3 million by 1901 and £19.3 million in 1914, or an increase twenty-two times over.

Increasing Famines

Alongside this process went a heavy increse in the number and intensity of famines in the second half of the nineteenth century. In the firest half of the nineteenth century there were seven famines, with an estimated total of 1½ million deaths from famine. In the second half of the nineteenth century there were twenty four famines (six between 1851 and 1875 and twenty four 1876 and 1900,) with an estimated total, according to official records, of over 20 million deaths. "Stated roughtly, faminess and scarcities have been four times as numerous during the last thirty years of the nineteenth century as they were one hundred years earlier, and four times more widespread" W. Digby, "Prosperous British India." 1901).

The Tribute grows

This new form of exploitation of India by Industrialist Capital did not exclude the continuation of the old forms of direct plunder.

The drain under the claim "Home Charges" as well as by private remittances without return of goods to India, continued and grew rapidly throughout the 19th century alongside the growth of trade. In the 20th century it grew more rapidly alongside a relative decline in trade. This advance in exploitation is suggested in the following striking form:—

Growth of Tribute from India to England
(In £ Million)

	1851	1901	1913-14	1933-34
Home Charges	2.5	17.3	19.4	27.5
Excess of Indian Exports	3.3	10.0	14.2	69.7

This enormous and rapidly growing tribute from India to England in reality concealed a new form of exploitation in the 20th century stage of the Finance Capital.

Era of Financr Capitalist Exploitation

It was necessary to open up India more completely for Commercial exploitation and penetration. This required the building up of the net work of railroads and roads. Irrigation which had been allowed to fall into neglect was built up.

Postal and Telegraph system was built up. The European Banking system also came in. English education was introduced for the supply of the clerks and sub-ordinate agents. This progress was directed to meet the commercial and strategic needs of foreign penetration and on extremely onerous financial terms to the people.

Railways provided for the new stage the development of British Capitalist investments in India.

Indian Public Debt

The nucleus of British Capital Investments in India was the public debt. The origin of this debt lay in the first place, in the costs of wars and other charges debited to India, and later also in the costs of the railway and public works schemes initiated by the Government. The original £70 million had been largely built up by the wars of Lord Wellesley, the first Afghan Wars, The Sikh Wars, and the suppression of the Mutiny in 1857. Of the next 70 million, by which the British Government doubled the total in eighteen years, only, £24 million were spent on State railways and irrigation works. Much of the rest of the debt was built up by the system of charging to India, every conceivable charge, that could be remotely, or, even fantastically connected with India, even to the extent of debiting India for the costs of a reception to the Sultan of Turkey in London, for the maintenance of the diplomatic and consular establishments of the United Kingdom of China and Persia for a war on Abbysinnia or for part of the expenses of the Mediterranean fleet.

In the hands of the British Government the Public Debt doubled in eighteen years from £70 million to £140 million. By 1900 it had reached £224 million. By 1913 it totalled £274 million, by 1939 on the eve of the second world war, it totalled 11,790 million rupees (£88 4'2 million) divided into 7,099 million rupees (£532'4 million) of Indian Debt and £351'8 million (4,691 million rupees) of sterling debt or debt in England. Thus in nearly three-quarters of a century of British direct rule the debt multiplied more than twelve times.

Private capital Investments from Britain in India thus, developed with railway construction, tea, Coffee, and rubber plantations and British Banking firms which established and developed during this period. By 1913 the foreign Banks, held, over three-quarters, of the total Bank deposits in India while the Indian Joint Stock Banks, had less than one fourth.

Thus British Financial Capital was only auxiliary to the trading process and did not replace it. But the British Industrial monopoly began to weaken in the last quarter of the 19th century. Even up to the war of 1914, Britain held fast to nearly two-thirds of the Indian market, against all the rest of the world. By the end of the war, the total British Capital Investments in India, were estimated to have reached 500 million pounds. At the same time Home charges had risen to nine million pounds, bringing the total of the profits on capital investments and direct tribute to close on 50 million pounds. This considerably exceeded the total of trading manufacturing and the ship building profits out of India. The finance capital exploitation of India had become a dominant character in the 20th century. As the British share of Indian Market fell, from two-thirds to a little over one-third, Japanese, American and eventually renewed German competition pressed forward, despite tariffs and imperial preference, and as Indian industrial progress was made in spite of obstacles, financial difficulties and official, discouragement, Britain's share in the Indian market under-went a considerable fall.

World War II

During the second world war the trade of India underwent a further big change. The share of the United Kingdon in Indian imports was 26'8% in 1942-43. Both Foreign and Indian competition had now become stronger and stronger.

The sharp decline has been specially marked in the export of Indian cotton goods. It had

declined by 57% in 1913-23. By 1939-40 it had reduced to 144 million yards from 3,057 million yards in 1913.

This decline was met with from the steady rising profits of Finance capitalist exploitation. The latest estimate of Indian annual Tribute to Britain has been given by Mr. Lawrence K. Rosinger, in his report "Independence for Colonial Asia —the Cost to the Western World," issued by the Foreign Policy Office of America and published in 1945.

According to him the annual tribute in £135 million comprised of items as below:—

Interest charges in £670 million investments at British rate of interest 6-7-8 per cent	£46 Million
Home Charges	£33 Million
Trade	£30 Million
Shipping	£20 Million
Remittances by Britishers serving in India	£6 Million
Total	£135 Million

(Hindustan Standard, Calcutta July, 5 1945)

After allowing for the fullest margin of variation for the factors, that cannot be exactly calculated, the broad conclusion is evident and inescapable that the exploitation of India in the modern period is far more intensive than in the old. It was estimated that in the three quarters of a century British rule up to the taking over by the Crown, the total tribute withdrawn from India had amounted to £150 million. In the modern period, during the two decades before the war, it is estimated that the total annual tribute from India to England is in the neighbourhood of £135 million to £150 million.

During the world war II, the expenditure estimated as India's war expenditure rose to stupendous heights, and ran into huge figures. The total amount of Sterling Balances due to India lying with the "Bank of England" came to £1,596.9 million or Rs. 21,292.5 million, uptil the end of June 1946, and continued to rise later. An arrangement called the "Dollar Pool Arrangement" was effected during the war, by which all countries of the Sterling Area, were compelled to pool together the entire dollar reserves, which they might earn by selling goods to the United States. India and the other countries could not buy directly from the United States on the strength of these dollar reserves, which could only be utilised by the United Kingdom Government to finance war purchases. The whole method of Imperialist war finance, through the issue of more and more currency notes had very serious repurcussions on the Indian economy. India came out of the war heavily impoverished and economically weakened. The real incidence of the war burden fell on the already starving masses of the people.

This whole process brought untold miseries and suffering to the mass of workers and peasants. For six long years people in India had to bear hardships of manifold wage cuts, food and cloth scarcity and country wide famines and destitution, that are not over yet.

Industrial Development In India

It is sometimes brought forward that the development of Industrial Finance capital era of British rule in India has lead to advancing Industrialliation; but this view is far from justified. Such industrial developement, as has taken place, had to fight its way against intense opposition from British capitalists. The development is lob-sied and only in light industries. There has been through out, discouragement of Indian industry by administrative action or inaction and by Tariff policy. The cotton industry had to struggle hard. After the first world War, there was a declaration of change of policy. This was done partly on account of military reasons and partly because of the growing foreign competition and political pressure. The Tarriff Board was set up and some industries, such as Cotton and Iron and Steel were developed.

The Swaraj party managed to secure protection for the Iron and Steel Industry in 1924,

but the Tariff Board did not give protection to several other Industries that demanded it. In 1930 in the face of popular protest Imperial Preference was introduced. The picture of industrial development in India before the last war compared most unfavourably with that of any Western country or even the soviet union in its record of two decades. During the second world war there was a dire necessity and great opportunity for building up industry in India, but even at the risk to the effect of sabotage to the war effort, no move was made to mobilise the vast recources of the country. For checking the natural growth of Indian industrialisation, the services of the Eastern Group Supply Council were utilised. This body under the plea of avoiding duplication among Empire countries, made the greatest conscious discrimination in placing orders for war supplies with various countries.

Sir Visvesvaraya, President, All India Manufacturers' Organisation, has observed:

> "The orders for products required for the present war seem to have been distributed among the various belligerent countries within the Empire on the advice of the Roger Mission and the Eastern Group Supply Council Conference. According to the arrangements made, only a few products which required no superior technical skill or practice seem to have been assigned to factories and industrialists in India. Products requiring heavy industries or higher technical skill were alloted to the United States of America and the Dominions of Canada and Australia."

Motor car and ship-building industries were prevented from being set up by refusing facilities for import of machinery and guarantees of purchase for the military. Even the recommendations of the American Technical Mission were not accepted by the Government of India. The help of the American techinicians and machinery was refused. The Government of India not only prevented development of basic industries in India, they even directly helped the foreign concerns such as the United Kindom Commercial Corporation through various war jobs. During this whole period India suffered exploitation on a scale unprecedented even in the history of British Rule.

5. THE RUIN OF THE VILLAGE AND AGRICULTURE

(from Sri R. Palme Dutta)

The nation in India lives in the village. Over-whelming part of its population has lived so from times immemorial, with agriculture as the main occupation, supported by other handicrafts; and with a stable and prosperous economic and social order. And account of this socio-economic system of India is given in other parts of this book. The classic description of Indian villages given in Marx's Capital, is interesting to recall and is given below.

"Those small and extremely ancient Indian communities, some of which have continued down to this day, are based on possession in common of the land, on the blending of agriculture and handicrafts, and on an unalterable division of labour, which serves, whenever a new community is started, as a plan and scheme ready cut and dried. Occupying areas of from 100 up to several thousand acres, each forms a compact whole producing all that it requires. The chief part of the products is destined for direct use by the community itself, and does not take the form of a commodity. Hence, production here is independent of that division of labour brought about, in Indian society as a whole by means of the exchange of commodities. It is in the surplus alone that becomes a commodity, and a portion of even that, not until it has reached the hands of State, into whose hands from time immemorial a certain quantity of these porducts has found its way in the shape of rent in kind.

"The constitution of these ancient communities varies in different parts of India. In those of the simplest fotm, the land is tilled in common, and the produce divided among the members. At the sametime, spinning and weaving are carried on in each family as subsidiary industries side by side with the masses thus occupied with one

and the same work, we find the 'chief inhabitant' who is judge, police and tax-gatherer in one; the book-keeper who keeps the accounts of the tillage and registers everything relating thereto: another official, who prosecutes criminals, protects, strangers travelling through, and escorts them to the next village: the boundary man, who guards the boundaries against neighbouring communities: the water-overseer, who distributes the water from the common tank for irrigation: the Brahmin, who conducts the religious services: the school-master, who on the sand teaches the children reading and writing: the calendar-Brahmin, or astrologer, who makes known the lucky or unlucky days for seed-time and harvest, and for every other kind of agricultural work: a smith and a carpenter, who make and repair all the agricultural implements: the potter, who makes all the pottery of the village: the barber, the washerman, who washes clothes, the silversmith, here and there the poet, who in some communities replaces the silversmith, in others the schoolmaster. This dozen of individuals is maintained at the expense of the whole community. If the population increases, a new community is founded, on the pattron of the old one, on unoccupied land.....

"The simplicity of the organisation for productian in these selfsufficing communities that constantly reproduce themselves in the same form and when accidentally destroyed, spring up again on the spot and with same name—this simplicity supplies the key to the secret of the unchangeableness in such striking contrast with the constant dissolution and refounding of Asiatic States, and the never-ceasing changes of dynasty. The structure of the economical elements of society remains untouched by the storm-clouds of the political sky." (Marx: "Capital", Vol I Ch. XIV)

This destruction of the Indian economic system may broadly be analysed as (a) the thorough denudation of the people by the direct plunder in the rule of the Company (b) destruction of cottage industry, specially the clothing industry which formed part of the village economy (c) the neglect of agricultural improvement, irrigation and the introduction of the uneconomic landlord system and failure to avoid the fragmentation of holdings, and the increasing pressure on land on account of the arrest of industrial development.

It is neccessary to trace the process of this destruction to find the secret of the problem of Indian poverty.

We have seen pictures of India as she was before the British advent, as she might be and as she is. The terrible poverty and suffering of the mass of Indian peasantry is the strongest indictment of the Imperial rule in India and constitues the first and most important problem today.

The unparalleled poverty—and the social backwardness in India is another name for the shattering of India's system of village economy, not by a process of urbanisation and industrialisation but by a complete destruction, leaving a void that threatens periodical disaster and ever developing crisis. This explosive situation has been the spur behind our political struggle and now remains the first concern of our nation.

The progress of the ruin of the village system is traced in the history of economic exploitation of India in British rule. It was started by the denudation of the "loot", followed by ruin of the cottage industries which had supplemented agriculture. Agriculture itself was impoverished by a system of landlord tenure and by neglect of irrigation, improved methods and failure to provide a system of financial aid to the agriculturist. Pressure on land, on the other hand increased yearly as no outlet in industry was allowed to lighten it. The village social and administrative system became a travesty of its old self. The landlord, the money lender, the law court and the police station were the only contacts of the cities with the villages. Ignorance, dirt, disease and starvation ruled supreme in them.

The pressure on agriculture has progressively increased under the British rule. This is the result of the destruction of the old balanced economy of Industry and agriculture. The old

industrial centres were ravaged and the population were driven more and more into the villages. The percentage of the population, dependent on agriculture, increased from 61% in 1891 steadily through the periodical figures, till it was 73% in 1921. The causes of this are given in the census of India report as follows:

"The extensive importation of cheap European piece goods and utensils, and the establishment in India itself of numerous factories of the Western type, have more or less destroyed many village industries. The high prices of agricultural produce have also led many village artisans to abandon their hereditary craft in favour of agriculture The extent to which this disintegration of the old village organisation is proceedings varies considerable in different parts. The change is most noticeable in the advanced provinces".

(Census of India Report, 1911, vol I p. 408)

Since 1911 the decline of industry and consequent still further dependence on agriculture has reached an even more extreme stage. Between 1911 and 1931 the number of those engaged in industry declined by two million and the percentage fell from 5.5 to 4.3. In 1941 it fell further to 4.2 per cent of the total population. These figures reflect the continuing havoc of "de-industrialisation", that is the destruction of old handicrafts without compensating for it with modern industry and with consequent continuous increase of the overcrowding of agriculture.

At the same time the proportion of non-food crops has increased in relation to food crops, thus the heavier and heavier overcrowding of agriculture with the increasing emphasis on non-food crops, for export (along side starvation of the Indian masses), is the direct consequence of British capitalist policy, which has required India as a market and source of raw materials.

This ever increasing over pressure on primitive, small scale agriculture, is the basic condition of the poverty of the Indian masses.

The consequences of over pressure on agriculture are that the proportion of available land to each cultivator is continuously diminishing. The holdings become smaller and smaller.

This has also resulted in a circle of stagnation and deterioration of agriculture.

The problem is not one of absolute land shortage. It arises, first, from the failure to use the existing cultivable area, owing to restrictions and neglect of development: and, second, from the extremely low level of production in the cultivated area, owing to the paralysing burdens of the existing social system and barriers to technical improvement and large-scale organisation.

A very large proportion of the cultivable land is at present not cultivated. In 1940 official statistics reveal that out of allultivable area of 355 million acres, only 59% is sown with crops, 13.2 is fallow, and no less than 27.3 per cent is cultivable land left waste. The reclaiming and cultivating of such waste land requires Government aid which has not been available.

Irrigation and public works were entirely neglected in the early part of British rule. Even later it was so neglected excepting in the Punjab and some other parts.

Consequent on these conditions and the paralysing burden on the cultivator the yield of crops in India compare very unfavourably with not only the United States and Japan but even China and Egypt. This low yield is not due to any inferiority in the soil of India, though the fertility is deteriorating no doubt on account of the absence of manure, which the poor cultivator cannot afford and the Government does not arrange to supply.

The causes of this growing crisis are to be found not in natural conditions, but in the sphere of social relations. The experience especially of the most recent period, has shown the vanity of well-meant and short-sighted attempts to preach to the cultivators on their backwardness, while

leaving their exploitation untouched, or of exhortations to them to improve their technique while they have neither the resources, nor the possibilities within the existing conditions of land tenure, to adopt improved technical methods.

Indeed, within the existing conditions and limitations, the skill and resourcefullness of the Indian cultivators have been testified by experts.

The secret of the growing crisis of Indian agriculture does not lie in any natural disadvantages, nor in any lack of skill and resourcefullness, within the limitations under which they have to work, or supposed innate backwardness of the cultivators, who are thwarted from development, but in the effects of imperialism, and the social relations maintained by it, which compel the overburdening, stagnation and deterioration of agriculture, condemn the mass of the cultivators to lives of increasing harassment and semi-starvation.

The Land-Lordism

In the traditional land system of India before British rule the land belonged to the peasantry and the Government received a proportion of the produce. The "king's share" or proportion payable to the king was traditionally fixed under the Hindu kings at one-sixth to one-twelfth of the produce, though this might be raised in times of war to one-fourth. The Mogul Emperors, when they established their dominion, raised this to one-third.

When the British established their dominion on the ruins of the Mogul Empire, they took over, the traditional land basis of revenue: but they transformed its character, and they thereby transformed the land system of India.

The burden of assesment in the mediaeval period was raised to extortionate proportions. Also in place of the flexable 'king's share' in the yearly produce a system of fixed money payments was introduced. The whole apparatues and legal conception of English landlord system was introduced and administered by an alien bureaucracy. From being the owners of the soil the peasantry were reduced to the status of tenants who could be ejected. The traditional self-governing village community was robbed of its economic and administrative role, a great part of common burden was assigned to individual holders.

There was a complete transformation of the old land system. Lord Cornwallis carried this process further by introducing Permanent Land Settlement in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and later extending it to parts of North Madras.

What were originally Revenue officials were constituted landlords in perpetuity subject to permanent fixed payment to the Government.

The purpose of permanent settlement was to create a new class of landlords as a social buttress of English rule. The Landlords had played a part not only in their loyal support to the British Government but also in preserving an anti-social order against the rising tide of political and social forces.

This new land system resulted in sharp and growing differences of various classes connected with agriculture. The class of landless labourers swelled up. The share of non-cultivating landlords in the total produce from agriculture has been going up and up. Former free peasantry were reduced to practical serfdom and enslaved to his creditor through debt. The proportion of landless labourers grew to one-third or even half of the agricultural population in some parts of the country.

Akin to these in many respects is the condition of the plantation slaves, or over 1 million labourers on the great tea, coffee and rubber plantations, owned as to 90 per cent by European companies which pay high dividends. The labour for these is recruited from all over India. The workers with their families live on the estates under the complete control of the companies, without the most elementary civil rights: the labour of men, women and children is exploited at low rates: and, although the penal

condition have been formally abolised in recent years and various regulations introduced since the Whitely Report in 1930, the workers remain effectively tied to their masters for prolonged periods, and even in practice, in many cases, for life.

The Burden of Debt

Another burden from which the peasantry suffers in India is the ever increasing indebtedness. That the burden of indebtedness has grown concomitantly with British rule, and had become urgent and ever more widespread problem in the most recent period is universally admitted. Writing in 1911, Sir Edward Maclagnan observed :

"It has long been recognised that indebtedness is no new thing in India. The writing of Munro, Elphinstone and others make it clear that there was much debt even at the beginning of our rule. But it is also acknowledged that the indebtedness has risen considerably during our rule, and more especially during the last half century. The reports received from time to time and the evidence of annual sale and mortgage data show clearly there has been a very considerable increase of debt during the last half century."

(Sir Edward Maclagan in 1911, quoted in the Report of the Central Banking Enquiry Committee, 1931, p. 55.)

Since then this burden of debt has steeply increased. In 1928 the Agricultural Commission reported :

"It is more than probable that the total rural debt has increased in the present century ; whether the proportion it bears to the growing assets of the people has remained at the same level, and whether it is a heavier or lighter burden on the more prosperous cultivator than of old, are questions to which the evidence we have received does not provide an answer."

(Report of the Agricultural Commission, 1928 p. 441).

It is sometimes stated that a debt is due to extravagance on social and religious festivals. But intensive economic enquiries held at various places and times show that debts incurred for these items or for litigation is only a small percentage of the total indebtedness. The major portions of this debt is incurred to meet urgent current needs of land revenue, rent payment of earliar debt and current cultivation.

The British legal system with the right of the creditor in the lands of the debtor created 'a happy hunting ground' for the money lender and the money lender was part of the exploitation machinery and was indispensable for the collection of land revenue. The peasant cultivator, if he had not yet fallen into the ranks of the landless labourer, thus lives today under a triple burden of the Government, the landlord and the money lender. He has also to pay additional indirect taxation such as the tax on salt, kerosene oil and alcoholic liquors. The revenue from salt duty reached no less than £8.1 million in 1939-40 or two fifths of the land revenue. The claims of the landlord for rent additional to the Government land revenue, fall on the majority as the claims of the money lenders for interest. What proportion of the produce of the peasant is thus taken from him and what is left for his subsistence, is difficult to ascertain, as no returns are available on this question. It may be estimated from different enquiries into the condition prevailing in particular areas that of the net total income more than two-thirds goes out of the villages by way of land revenue, interest charges, and absentee landlords. The condition of the peasants in these circumstances explain this astounding per capita income in India.

One result is the evermore rapid growth of landless labour class in the villages, increasing in a single decade, 1921-31, from one-fifth to one-third of total number of cultivators and since then developing further into, probably, one half of the total.

Its other consequences are the growing food shortage which has become a permanent feature of the country and the terrible toll in death and misery taken by famines and epidemics.

VILLAGE REVIVAL

(Gandhiji)

I have believed and repeated times without number that India is to be found not in its few cities but in the 7,00,000 villages... the bulk of the population live on the verge of starvation and ten percent is semi-starved and millions have to rest content with a pinch of dirty salt and chillies and polished rice or parched grain.

.....

Over 75 percent of the population are agriculturists. But there cannot be much spirit of self-government about us if we take away or allow others to take away from them almost the whole of the result of their labour.

.....

What we need is not a knowledge of the three R's but a knowledge of their economic life and how they can better it. They are today working as mere automatons, without any responsibility whatsoever to their surroundings and without feeling the joy of work.

.....

The revival of the village industries is but an extention of the khadi effort..... ...With us their revival means life, their extinction means death to the villagers.

If we should have electricity in every village home, I should not mind villages plying their implements and tools with the help of electricity. But then the village communities or the State would own power-houses just as they have their grazing pastures. But where there is no electricity and no machinery what are idle hands to do ?

.....

If only the capitalist class will read the signs of the times, revise their notions of God-given rights to all they possess, in an incredibly short space of time the seven hundred thousand dung-heaps which today pass muster as villages can be turned into abodes of peace, health and comfort.

.....

I have no doubt that if we have democratic Swaraj as it must be if freedom is won through non-violence, the Kisan must hold power in all phases including political power.

If Swaraj is attained by the effort of the whole people as it must be under non-violence, the Kisans must come to their own and have the uppermost voice.





CHAPTER XI

EARLY NATIONAL RESISTANCE TO BRITISH DOMINATION

I. RESISTANCE MOVEMENTS BEFORE MUTINY

AMONG the various fallacies on which British written Indian History is founded, perhaps the greatest is that India had no national consciousness before the British. It is forgotten that the idea of a national entity and sentiment was unknown even in the West before the 19th Century. England had attained something like a nationhood earlier than other countries, perhaps, owing to her insular situation and the economic development incidental to the Industrial Revolution and the Indian Empire. France before 1789 was little more than a congeries of Gascons and Provencals, Britons and Normans and the others, and the conception of a French nation was born only with the great Revolution. Similarly German nationalism was the product of the Napoleonic onslaughts. Italy also developed this idea of a nation quite late. India imbibed the idea of a national being no doubt as a result of the western impact. But it does not mean that there was no struggle or resistance against the foreign rule, disruption and exploitation even before the spectacular outbreak of 1857.

It is true that at this time the British had not yet decided on a policy of preserving stagnation and social backwardness and there was a process of progress towards reforms. Slavery, *sati* and infanticide were abolished. Western education was introduced and a free press was allowed to come into being. There were several liberal and able administrators like Bentinck, Munroe, Metcalfe and Elphinston.

But the economic exploitation of the country and its masses was carried to the extreme during the rule of the Company, and the villages and towns were reduced to an unparalleled state of poverty and devastation. This story of ruthless loot of the East India Company is briefly given in an earlier chapter.

A crude urge for resistance to this alien spoilation manifested itself in the widespread, and as it would seem, popularly supported organisation of what has been termed as Dacoits and Thugs,

throughout the times of Warren Hastings and Cornwallis and even later, Warren Hastings had to subdue the Pindaris after considerable military action with troops numbering 12,00,000. The Thugs were not merely professional murderers but it would seem, represented an impoverished and expropriated agricultural class and a militant semi-secret movement, and the Government had to put it down with a ferocity and maligning propaganda. The Sanyasis, immortalised in Bankim's "Anand Muth" were a similar puritanic Hindu revivalist semi-military body. 5,000 of these are said to have been employed by Sirajuddaula in his campaign against the British in 1764.

The Muslim counterpart of this is the Wahabi movement that raised a popular and widespread revolt against the new shackles of the Muslims. It had a remarkable organization that survived long persecution and ranged from Bengal and Bihar to Punjab and the Frontier.

"All India" Metcalfe wrote in 1824, "is at all times looking out for our downfall. The people everywhere would rejoice or fancy they rejoice, at our destruction." The resentment and opposition to the British rule was particularly strong among the Muslims. There was a sort of religious war against the British. Even learning of English was forbidden. In 1843 Lord Allenborough, Governor-General, sent a warning and advised the adoption of the "divide and rule policy". "I cannot close my eyes to the belief that the race (Mohammedan) is fundamentally hostile to us and our true policy is to reconciliate the Hindus."

The Indian masses, Muslims as well as Hindus, suffered ever deepening improverishment and hated the strange ways of alien rulers. "Classes" were embittered by dis-possession and injured pride. These conditions gave rise to the Indian Mutiny in 1857.

.....

2. THE FIRST WAR OF INDIAN INDEPENDENCE.

India's first War of Independence, described by the British as the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 is a much maligned, misrepresented and underrated phenomenon in Indian history. Ridiculous minor incidents like the "greased cartridges" or personal vendetta or ambition like that of the dispossessed rulers of decadent empires is held forth as the motive power of this revolutionary cataclysm. Even the national historians have represented this popular revolution as reactionary, measuring it with a twentieth century socialistic ideology.

The causes that lead to the revolt: are they not writ large in the ruin and disruption of the rule of John Company, the open and unashamed plunder followed by a more thorough insidious economic exploitation? It would have been astounding if the common people did not react to these. The crisis no doubt came with the smash-and-grab tactics of Dalhousie that brought the feudal rulers into the fray. It is true that no charter of the peoples' liberty was drawn up and the shape of the change they desired was vague and unformulated. This was later proved to be the greatest weakness of the revolution and resulted in its defeat. But there is little doubt that a new order would have been born of this upheaval, in line with the growing world trend and India would have avoided a century of further stagnation. As it was the feeling of the people of all ranks and classes, Hindus and Muslims, prince and peasant was of a strong dislike of the foreigner and everything associated with him and of determination to put an end to the alien dominations in political, economic and social spheres.

Veer Savarkar is perhaps, the only historian who has correctly estimated and formulated the ideology that moved and inspired the Revolution of 1857, and some extracts are given below from his stirring saga.

One hundred years after the battle of Plassey, the first all-India attempt at liberation from the foreign yoke was made. It failed to achieve its object for several reasons. It lacked a central plan, co-ordination and leadership. It did not enlist the urge of all the people by presenting them with the promise and blue print of a

new order. Revival of the old order and restoration of old dynasties could not stir up any enthusiasm and sacrifice. The British system of intrigue and stooges prevailed and triumphed in the end, with the help of many Indians.

Thus according to Savarkar :—

"The United Provinces, Oudh, Rohilkand, Behar, Bundelkund and Central India were the field of Kurukshetra of the War of Independence of 1857.....The Sikh princes and people..... did not wish well to the revolutionaries even at heart; nor did they remain neutral; nay, more, they did not hesitate to side openly with the British.....As regards the princes of Rajputana, most of them remained neutral and would not openly help either side.....the Mahratta throne, ousted out of Raigarh, reappeared again in an ocean of blood at Cawnpore.....The rising in the north took place with an inconceivable, lightning like rapidity, and with the determination to kill or die. Instead of starting up immediately, the south waited for some time to watch the fortune of war in the north.....It did not rise as soon as the north rose." (Savarkar) It was Sir Salar Jung, Prime Minister of the Nizam of Hyderabad, who was instrumental in foiling the uprising in the south, and it was Dinkar Rao, Dewan of Gwalior, who sabotaged it in Central India.

The revolt of the Indian army of the Company started on May 10, 1857 at Meerut. The sepoys marched on and captured Delhi and proclaimed Bahadur Shah II Emperor of India. The province of Agra rose, although the city remained in British hands. Lucknow was besieged, relieved, evacuated and re-occupied by the British in quick succession. Cawnpore fell to Nana Sahib, adopted son of ex-Peshwa Baji Rao II. The revolt in Rohilkand began in May; that in Central India and Bundelkhand is associated with the undying memory of Lakshmi Bai, Rani of Jhansi and Tantia Tope, Nana Sahib's general. The Rani, "best and bravest" of the rebels, died on the battlefield in June, 1858, after having occupied and held Gwalior for a short time. Tantia Tope was caught and executed a year later. Nana Sahib disappeared into the forest fastness of Nepal. The focal centre of the rebellion in Bihar was Arrah, where Raja Kumar Singh, a Rajput zamindar, performed great deeds of valour and kept the British at bay till his death. Bahadur Shah II, the old titular Mughal Emperor was captured and deported. His two sons and family were butchered by a British subaltern named Hodson.

The first War of Independence was waged and lost in a year's time.

3. IDEOLOGY OF THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE.

Swadharma and Swaraj

(Veer Savarkar)

What, then, were the real causes and motives of this Revolution? What were they that could make thousads of heroes unsheath their swords and flash them on the battlefield? What were they that they had the power to brighten up pale and rusty crowns and raise from the dust abased flags? What were they that for them men by the thousand willingly poured their blood year after year? What were they that Moulvies preached them, learned Brahmins blessed them, that for their success prayers went up to Heaven from the mosques of Delhi and the temples of Benares?

These great principles were Swadharma and Swaraj. In the thundering roar of 'Din, Din,' which rose to protect religion, when there were evident signs of a cunning, dangerous, and destructive attack on religion dearer than life, and in the terrific blows dealt at the chain of slavery with the holy desire of acquiring Swaraj, when it was evident that chains of political slavery had been put round them and their God given liberty wrested away by subtle tricks in these two, lies the root principle of the Revolutionary War. In what other history is the principle of love of one's religion and love of one's country manifested more nobly than in ours? However much foreign and partial historians might have tried to paint our glorious land in dark colours, so long as the name of Chitore has not been erased from the pages of our history, so long as the names of Pratapaditya

and Guru Gobind Singh are there, so long the principles of Swadharma and Swaraj will be embedded in the bone and marrow of all the sons of Hindusthan. They might be darkened for a time by the mist of slavery-even the sun has its clouds-but very soon the strong light of these self-same principles pierces through the mist and chases it away. Never before were there such a number of causes for the universal spreading of these traditional and noble principles as there were in 1857.

These particular reasons revived most wonderfully the slightly unconscious feelings of Hindusthan, and the people began to prepare for the fight for Swadharma and Swaraj. In his Proclamation of the establishment of Swaraj, the Emperor of Delhi says, 'Oh, you sons of Hindusthan, if we make up our mind we can destroy the enemy in no time! We will destroy the enemy and will release from dread our religion and our country, dearer to us than life itself'. What is holier in this world than such a Revolutionary War, a war for the noble principles propounded in this sentence, 'release from dread our religion and our country, dearer to us than life itself'? The seed of the Revolution of 1857 is in this holy and inspiring idea, clear and explicit, propounded from the throne of Delhi, THE PROTECTION OF RELIGION AND COUNTRY. In the Proclamation issued at Bareilly, he says, "Hindus and Mahomedans of India! Arise! Brethren, arise! Of all the gifts of God, the most gracious is that of Swaraj. Will the oppressive Demon who has robbed us of it by deceit be able to keep it away from us for ever? Can such an act against the will of God stand for ever? No, no. The English have committed so many atrocities that the cup of their sins is already full. To add to it, they have got now the wicked desire to destroy our holy religion! Are you going to remain idle even now? God does not wish that you should remain so for he has inspired in the hearts of Hindus and Mahomedans the desire to turn the English out of our country. And by the grace of God, and your valour, they will soon be so completely defeated that in this our Hindusthan there will not remain even the least trace of them! In this our army, the differences of small and great shall be forgotten, and equality shall be the rule: for, all who draw the sword in this holy war for the defence of religion are equally glorious. They are brethren, there is no rank among them. Therefore, I again say to all my Hindu brethren, 'Arise and jump into the battlefield for this divinely ordained and supreme duty!' The man who, after seeing such magnificent utterances by the Revolutionary leaders, does not understand its principles is, as we said, either a fool or a knave. What stronger evidence is needed to prove that Indian warriors drew their swords at the time for Swadharma and Swaraj, feeling it the duty of every man to fight for the rights given to man by God. These Proclamations issued at different times and places during the war make it unnecessary to dilate more on its principles. These Proclamations were not issued by non-entities; but they were orders issued from adorable and powerful thrones. They were burning exptessions of the agitated feelings of the time. In these the real heart of the Nation had spoken out, when at the time of war, there was no occasion to conceal real sentiments through pressure or fear. This tremendous, heroic shout Swadharma and Swaraj, proclaims to the world the character of the Revolution in which all who draw the sword are equally glorious.

But were these two principles understood as different and exclusive of each other? At least, orientals have never had the idea that Swadharma and Swaraj have no connection with each other. The Eastern mind has maintained a full and traditional belief, as is also said by Mazzini, that there is no vast barrier between Heaven and earth but that the two are ends of one and the same thing. Our idea of Swadharma, too, is not contradictory to that of Swaraj. The two are connected as means and end. Swaraj without Swadharma is despicable and Swadharma without Swaraj is powerless. The sword of material power, Swaraj should always be ready drawn for our object, our safety is the other world, Swadharma. This trend of the Eastern mind will be often found in its history. The reason why in the East all revolutions take a religious form, nay more, the reason why Eastern history knows of no revolutions

unconnected with religion, lies in the all embracing meaning that the word 'Dharma' has. That this dual principle of Swadharma and Swaraj always seen in the history of India, appeared also in the Revolution of 1857, should be a matter of no surprise. We have already referred to the first Proclamation of the Emperor of Delhi. Afterwards when Delhi was besieged by the English and the war was at its height, the Emperor issued another Proclamation addressing all Indians thus: 'Why has God given us wealth, land, power? They are not for individual pleasure, but they are given for the holy object of defence of our religion'. But where are now the means to attain this holy end? As said in the Proclamation given above, where is the gift of Swaraj, the greatest of all the gifts of God?

Where is wealth? Where is land? Where is power? In the plague of slavery all this divine independence is all but dead. In the above Proclamation in order to show how the plague of slavery was destroying India, full descriptions are given as to how the Kingdoms of Nagpur, Ayodhya, and Jhansi were trampled down into dust. And it awakens the people to the fact that they are guilty of the sin of destroying religion in the house of God having lost these means of defending religion. The command of God, is, Obtain Swaraj, for, that is the chief key to the protection of Dharma. He who does not attempt to acquire Swaraj, he who sits silent in slavery, he is an atheist and hater of Religion. Therefore, rise for Swadharma and acquire Swaraj!

"Rise for Swadharma and acquire Swaraj!" What divine events in the history of India are due to the realisation of this principle! The poet-saint Ramdas gave the same dictum to the Mahrattas 250 years ago. "Die for your Dharma, kill the enemies of your Dharma while you are dying; in this way fight and kill, and take back your kingdom!"

This alone is the principle in the Revolutionary War of 1857. The true and only telescope which will show it in its true and clear form, is the above verse of Ramdas.

Seeing at it through this telescope, what a spectacle comes into view! The war fought for Swadharma and Swaraj does not lose its lustre by defeat. The splendour of Guru Govind Singh's life is none the less, because his efforts did not immediately succeed at the time. Nor do we think the less of the rising of 1848 in Italy, because the Revolution failed completely at that time.

Justin McCarthy says: "The fact was that throughout the greater part of the northern and north western provinces of the Indian peninsula there was a rebellion of the native races against the English power. It was not alone the Sepoy who rose in revolt—it was not by any means a merely military mutiny. It was a combination of military grievance, national hatred, and religious fanaticism against the English occupation of India. The native princes and the native soldiers were in it. The Mahomedan and the Hindu forgot their old religious antipathies to join against the Christian. Hatred and panic were the stimulants of that great rebellious movement. The quarrel about the greased cartridges was but the chance spark flung in among all the combustible material. If that spark had not lighted it, some other would have done the work.....The Meerut Sepoys found, in a moment, a leader, a flag, and a cause, and *the mutiny was transformed into a revolutionary war.* When they reached the Jumna, glittering in the morning light, they had all unconsciously seized one of the great critical moments of history and converted a military mutiny into a *national and religious war*!"

Charles Ball writes: "At length, the torrent overflowed the banks, and saturated the normal soil of India. It was then expected that those waves would overwhelm and destory the entire European element and that when the torrent of rebellion should again confine itself within bounds, patriotic India, freed from its alien rulers would bow only to the independent sceptre of a native prince. The movement now, assumed a more important aspect. It became *the rebellion of a whole people* incited to outroge by resentment for imaginary wrongs and sustained in their delusions by hatred and fanaticism."

White writes in his Complete History of the Great Sepoy War :—"I should be wanting in faithfulness as an historian if I failed to record with admiration the courage displayed by the Oudhians. The great fault of the Oudh Talukdars from a moral point of view was their having made a common cause with the murderous mutineers. But for this, they might have been regarded as noble patriots, fighting in a good cause, *pro rege et pro patria*, for the King and the Motherland"—for Swaraj and Swadesh!

4. THE RANI OF JHANSI

(Veer Savarkar)

In sacred Varanasi, there lived in the retinue of Chimnaji Appa Peshwa Moropant, Tambe and his wife Bhagirathi Bai. This couple had the good fortune of giving birth to a daughter who was to be a veritable flashing sword in the hands of Hindusthan.... It was in 1835 that Bhagirathi gave birth to the heroine, Ranee Lakshmi Bai. This brave woman's name in youth was Manu Bai.

When Manu was hardly three or four years old, the whole family left Benares and went to the court of Bajirao at Brahmavarta. There she was so much liked by all the people that they called her "Chabeli." Prince Nana Sahib and the sweet Chabeli! When two such children braced each other in childish affection, what a sight must it have been to the people of Brahmavarta! What eyes would not glisten with joy to see Prince Nana Sahib and the Chabeli playing together in the armoury and learning their lessons in sword-play-lessons which they were destined to use in later life for the defence of their country and their religion.

.....

Nana was eighteen years old and Lakshmi Bai was seven. In Brahmavarta at this time, were being brought up three of the most important characters of the Revolutionary War of 1857, Nana Sahib, Queen Lakshmi Bai, and Tanya Tope. It is said that in every festival of *Yamadvitiya*, these two, Nana Sahib and Lakshmi Bai—historical brother and sister—used to perform the ceremony of *Bhaabij*. We can well picture to ourselves the sweet, attractive, spirited Chabeli with golden dish and with lamps in her hand, performing the ceremony. Such occasion when a Lakshmi Bai is waving the sacred lamp round the face of a Nana Sahib, such occasions make history more romantic than romance!

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In 1842, the Chabeli was given in marriage to Maharaja Gangadhar Rao Baba Sahib of Jhansi, and thus became the Maharani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi.

.....

When she adopted her darling Damodar as her son, soon after the sudden death of her husband in 1853, the English annexed Jhansi refusing to recognise the rights of adoption.

But Jhansi was not a state which could be annexed by mere word or letter. Not the Banka of Nagpur, but the dear sister Chabeli of Nana, Ranee Lakshmi Bai was ruling there.

.....

And thus, from the Vindhyas to the Jumna, there was not a vestige of British authority left. Brahmins, Moulvies, Sirdars, Dorakdars, Sepoys, the police, Rajas, Raos, bankers, villagers—all were desirous of fighting for only one thing and that was Independence! And to unite together these thousand voices in one harmonious whole, the Lakshmi of Jhansi declared with her sweet but firm voice, "None can have my Jhansi; he who dares may try!"

Very rerely had the world heard such a firm "No!" Generous and liberal to a fault India has always been pronouncing and swearing by "I shall give!", "I shall give!", so far. But here was a strange phenomenon today a set face and a stern voice which said, "I will not give! I will not give up my Jhansi!" Would to heaven, O Mother, that every one of thy sons and daughters had said the same. The Feringhi was taken aback at this unexpected assertion; and Sir Huge Rose was sent, with five thousand armed men and a considerable number of guns, to gauge the extent of the disturbance and to quell it.

1. The Indian War of Independence 1857 by V. D. Savarkar

Bands of Revolutionaries distributed all over the country from the banks of the Narbada upwards, now crowded into Jhansi: and that is why Sir Hugh advanced with great dispatch on Jhansi to reduce this stronghold of the Revolutionaries.

.....

But the English army suffered enormously as soon as they set foot on the soil of Jhansi. For they found, to their great surprise, that all the tract of land surrounding Jhansi had been laid waste by order of the Queen in order that the enemy should have no supplies of any sort. Not a blade of corn in the fields, not a vestige of grass on the meadows, not a tree which could afford shelter.

.....

The enemy had, after all, defiled her Jhansi! Her eyes were ablaze with anger, she was almost mad with rage. She took up her sword and with her small force of a thousand or fifteen hundred men, she marched down the fort. The tigress to avenge her clubs runs not so fleetingly.

.....

When the Queen stood on the walls of the fortress (which the enemy had decided to storm only the next day on account of its strength), looking at this sad, sad picture, she was smitten with grief and tears started to her eyes. The Queen of Jhansi wept. Those beautiful eyes were red with weeping! Her Jhansi to be reduced to this! Then she looked up and saw the flag of the Feringhi flying over the walls of Jhansi, and a strange fire shone from those weeping eyes!

.....

Lakshmi greeted all her dear subjects and gave her blessings for the last time! Her subjects were full of tears at the thought that she was leaving Jhansi, perhaps for ever. She took a select number of horsemen with her. An elephant with jewels on him was placed in the middle and Ranee Lakshmi descended the fort amidst cries of "Har, Har, Mahadev!" She put on male apparel: a steel armour covered her person, a *Jammia* was in her girdle: a fine sword hung from her belt, a silver cup was in her *padder*, and her adopted child Damodar was on her back, tied in a silk *Dhoti*. Thus accoutred, riding on a noble white steed, this queen, Lakshmi, looked like the goddess of war.

.....

Thus closed the day and thus rose the 18th of the month! This day, the English had resolved to make desperate charges. From all directions, they advanced on the fort, and tried their utmost. General Smith, forced to retire the day before, was very determined to-day and, aided by re-inforcements, he charged the same Jhansi side he had gone for the day before. Sir Hugh Rose thought that his presence was also absolutely necessary and so he was personally present with the force attacking the Jhansi side. The Ranee too was ready for him with all her forces. "She was ready with all her soul to do her duty". That day, she wore a *Chanderi* turban embroidered all over, a *tamamee* cloak, and *pyjamas*. A pearl necklace was round her neck. Her famous steed being tired that day, a new, fresh looking horse was made ready for her, fully caparisoned. While her two beautiful maids were taking sherbet, news came that the English were advancing. Lakshmi immediately darted forward from her tent. The arrow flies not so rapidly, the lightning flashes not forth with such force from the clouds, a lioness leaves not her lair so quickly to fall upon the approaching elephant! She rode her horse, lifted her sword, and charged the enemy with her army. An English writer says, "Immediately, the beautiful Ranee went over the field and made a firm stand against the array of Sir Hugh Rose. She led her troops to repeated and fierce attacks and, though her ranks were pierced through and were gradually becoming thinner and thinner, the Ranee was seen in the foremost rank, rallying her shattered troops and performing prodigies of valour. But all was of no avail. The camel corps, pushed up by Sir Hugh Rose in person, broke her last line. Still the dauntless and heroic Ranee held her own."

But while her side was fighting with such unexampled bravery, she saw the English army advancing on her rear—for they had broken through the ranks of Revolutioneries who were holding the posts behind her!

The artillery dumb, the main army routed, the victorious English army closing on her from all sides, with only fifteen or twenty horsemen with her, Rance Lakshmi, accompanied by her maids, put her horse to a gallop in order to break through the enemy, and to join her comrades on the other side. The Feringhi horsemen of the Hussars, who knew not so far where she was, fired shot after shot on her and pursued her like hounds. But the Queen, with unexampled courage, cleared her way with her sword and marched on. Suddenly was heard a cry, "I am dead, Bai Sahib, I am dead!" Alas, whose is this cry? Lakshmi turned round and found that it was her maid Mandar whom a white soldier had shot and killed! Angered, she attacked the Feringhi, and her blow felled him on the spot. She had avenged the death of fair Mandar! She then marched on. She came to a small rill. Now, one jump and Jhansi would have been out of the Feringhi's clutches. But her horse would not take that jump! If only she had her old horse! As if the fiery line of a magician was round him the horse moved in circles round and round, but would not cross. Before you could say "one", the English horsemen closed on her! Still not a word of surrender or fear! One sword against their several swords, yet she closed on them. She crossed sword with sword with them all, but one of them hit her on the head, from behind. With that blow, the right part of her head, and even her right eye came out—just then, another blow hit her on the chest. Oh Lakshmi, Lakshmi! The last drop of thy sacred blood is dripping and, therefore, now, Mother, take this last sacrifice for thee! Even at the point of death, she killed the British foe who had attacked her, and now the young Queen was breathing her last breath!

A faithful servant, Ramchandra Rao Deshmukh, was near. He took her to a cottage near by. Ganga Das Bawa gave her cold water to drink to quench her thirst and a bed to lie down upon. Bathed in blood, this goddess of war reclined on the bed, and then her soul quietly fleeted from her body to heaven! As soon as she was dead, Ramchandra Rao, in accordance with her dying instructions prepared a pile of grass unseen by the enemy: he put her on that pyre and, before the touch of slavery could defile even her dead body, she was cremated.

On the pyre, if not on the throne! But Lakshmi is still with her sweetheart Liberty! She has forced open the gates of death by falling in battle and has now entered the other world. Pursuit can no longer harm her. Wicked Pursuit must pass through those roaring flames before it can do so.

Thus fought Lakshmi. She had achieved her purpose, fulfilled her ambition, carried out her resolve! One such life vindicates the whole existence of a nation! She was the concentrated essence of all virtues. A mere woman, hardly twenty-three yet, beautiful as rose, charming in her manners, pure of conduct, she had a power of organisation of her subjects, exhibited by very few, even among men. The flame of patriotism was always burning in her heart. And she was proud of her country's honour and pre-eminent in war. It is very rarely that a nation is so fortunate as to be able to claim such an angelic person as a daughter and a queen!

1. War of Independence by Veer Savarkar





CHAPTER XII

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ROLE OF IMPERIALISM

1 NATIONAL DEMORALISATION: A SCHOOL FOR STOOGES

(G. C. Sondhi)

THE British conquest in India had been diplomatic rather than military. And that word covers and justifies a technique and system of demoralisation that was one of the consequences of subjection to foreign rule in India. No doubt India was at the time in the disorganised state following the break-up of the Moghul Empire and there were other rivalries and disputes between the rulers and groups that were forming themselves. Mahrattas, Rajputs and Sikhs, everybody was trying to strike for himself. The British taking advantage of this state, discovered and perfected the system of Quislings which lasts to our day.

"One of the chief duties of the British Residents at these courts was to bribe and corrupt the ministers and other officials. 'Their spy system was perfect,' says a historian. They had complete information of the courts and armies of their adversaries. They had this information while their adversaries lived in ignorance of what the British were doing or were going to do. The fifth column of the British functioned continuously in the moments of crisis and in the heat of war there would be defections in their favour which made a great difference. They won most of their battles before the actual fighting took place. That had been so at Plassey and that was repeated again and again right up to the Sikh wars. A notable instance of desertion was that of a high officer in the service of the British and went over to them with his entire army at the moment of Battle. He was awarded for this later by having been made the ruler of a new Indian State carved out of the territories of Scindia whom he had betrayed. The state still exists, but the man's name became a byword for treason and treachery, just as 'Quislings' in recent years."

(Nehru. Discovery of India)

The origin of some proudest ruling dynasties in the Indian States is such a record of treachery. Most of the bigger feudal states are the prize money paid for services rendered to save British power in the crisis of 1856.

After the Mutiny the technique of manufacturing a quisling class was developed more and more. The feudal class of Landlords was set up as we have seen and other classes of merchants and Government officials promoted, whose interests were vested in the perpetuation of the British domination in India. The rulers and feudal lords were graded

with such honours as salutes of so many guns and their loyalty rewarded with magnificent if rather ridiculous titles such as "Farzand-i-Khas-i-daulat-i-Englishia", the chosen son of the British Empire; "Indirmahindir" the supreme lord of lords; "Sapre-e-sultanat", the shield of the empire, etc.

Also after the mutiny English education was introduced and employment of the impoverished middle classes in the subordinate Government Civil Service became the goal and ambition.

Government patronage followed on manifest loyalty and subservience. Nationalist leanings were frowned upon. A class of 'Babus' was born whose highest ambition was to emulate the Sahib and the ruling race in their mode, manner and dress. Entry into the Indian Civil Service or other higher positions became the highest ambition. The whole outlook of these 'Brown bureaucrats' with a few exceptions was copied from the English and they had little touch with the masses of the people. A new qualification "England returned" became as proud a possession as a high academic degree. Partly it was the progressive urge to emulate the West. But a visit to or training in an university say, in America, did not count for so much.

The army in India, where the high ranks were not open to Indians, was modelled in a way to create narrow caste, communal and provincial differences. The army was sedulously guarded from any National influences. But much worse than the army was the police, including the numerous network of spies and informers. The police was recruited and trained with the object of suppression and thwarting of nationalist thought and feeling in the country and were the worse hated class.

Later, as nationalist politics came into existence the system of titles was introduced. Rai-sahib and Khan-sahib were the badges conferred for loyalty and even honorary spying and opposition to the "seditious" elements.

There was a vying with each other among the town aristocracy for a place in the next years' Honours List and the candidates filled the verandahs of the District Magistrate's house every morning. For outstanding national treachery one could aspire to a Knighthood or even to a Jagir, or a prize post under the Political department, in some State. This systematised demoralisation penetrated the village also specially in the province of the Punjab which had to be held more securely against the rising tide of nationalist discontent. "Squares" of land were awarded there to the military pensioners, honorary magistrates, numbardars, *Sfed poshes*—those who are clad in white, *Kursi nashins*—those who are offered a chair when they come, *the Durbaris*, those who are on the list of invitees to darbars form the numerous classes of British fifth column. (Counter titles were of course conferred by the public and such epithets as "Ji-Huzoors", "Jholi Chuk" and "Toady Buccha" were added to our vocabulary !)

Loyalty to the Sircar as against the country became the requisite and measure of worldly success in almost all conditions of life.

2. THE TECHNIQUE OF BRITISH RULE BALANCE AND COUNTERPOISE

(Nehru)

The Revolt of 1857-58 was essentially a feudal rising, though there were some nationalistic elements in it. Yet, at the same time, it was due to the abstention or active help of the Princes and other feudal chiefs that the British succeeded in crushing it. Those who had joined the Revolt were as a rule the disinherited and those deprived of their power and privileges by British authority, or those who feared that some such fate was in store for them. British policy after some hesitation had decided in favour of a gradual elimination of the Princes and the establishment of direct British rule. The Revolt brought about a change in this policy in favour not only of the Princes but of the taluqdars or big landlords. It was felt that it was easier to control the masses through these feudal or semi-feudal chiefs. These taluqdars of Oudh had been the tax-farmers of the Moghuls but, owing to the weakness of

the central authority, they had begun to function as feudal landlords. Nearly all of them joined the Revolt, though some took care to keep a way of escape open. Inspite of their rebellion, the British authority offered to reinstate them (with a few exceptions) and confirm them in their estates on conditions of 'loyalty and good service'. Thus these taluqdars, who take pride in calling themselves the 'Barons of Oudh' became one of the pillars of British rule.

Though the Revolt had directly affected only certain parts of the country, it had shaken up the whole of India and, particularly, the British administration. The government set about reorganizing their entire system. The British Crown, that is the Parliament, took over the country from the East India Company: the Indian army, which had begun the Revolt by its mutiny, was organized afresh. The techniques of British rule, which had already been well established, were now clarified and confirmed and deliberately acted upon. Essentially these were: the creation and protection of vested interests bound up with British rule; and a policy of balancing and counterpoise of different elements, and the encouragement of fissiparous tendencies and division amongst them.

The Princes and the big landlords were the basic vested interests thus created and encouraged. But now a new class, even more tied up with British rule, grew in importance. This consisted of the Indian members of the services, usually in subordinate positions. Previously the employment of Indians had been avoided except when this could not be helped, and Munro had pleaded for such employment. Experience had now demonstrated that Indians so employed were so dependent on the British administration and rule that they could not be relied upon and treated as agents of that rule. In the pre-Mutiny days most of the Indian members of the subordinate services had been Bengalis. These had spread out over the upper provinces wherever the British administration needed clerks and the like in its civil or military establishments. Regular colonies of Bengalis had thus grown up at the administrative or military centres in the United Provinces, Delhi and even in the Punjab. These Bengalis accompanied the British armies and proved faithful employees to them. They became associated in the minds of the rebels with the British Power and were greatly disliked by them and given uncomplimentary titles.

Thus began the process of the indianization of the administrative machine in its subordinate ranks, all real power and initiative being, however, concentrated in the hands of the English personnel. As English education spread, the Bengalis had no longer a virtual monopoly of service and other Indians came in, both on the judicial and executive sides of the administration. This indianization became the most effective method of strengthening British rule. It created a civil army and garrison everywhere, which was more important even than the military army of occupation. There were some members of this civil army who were able and patriotic and nationalistically inclined, but like the soldier, who also may be patriotic in his individual capacity, they were bound up by the army code and discipline, and the price of disobedience, desertion and revolt was heavy. Not only was this civil army created out but the hope and prospect of employment in it affected and demoralized a vast and growing number of others. There was a measure of prestige and security in it and a pension at the end of the term of service, and if a sufficient subservience was shown to one's superior officers, other failings did not count. These civil employees were the intermediaries between the British authorities and the people, and if they had to be obsequious to their superiors, they could be arrogant and exact obedience from their own inferiors and the people at large.

The lack of other avenues of employment, other ways of making a living, added additional importance to government service. A few could become lawyers or doctors, but even so success was by no means assured. Industry hardly existed. Trade was largely in the hands of certain hereditary classes who had a peculiar aptitude for it and who helped each other. The new education did not fit any one for trade or industry: its chief

aim was government service. Education was so limited as to offer few openings for a professional career; other social services were almost non-existent. So government service remained and, as the colleges poured out their graduates, even the growing government services could not absorb them all, and a fierce competition arose. The unemployed graduates and others formed a pool from which government could always draw; they were a potential threat to the security of even the employed. Thus the British Government in India became not only the biggest employer but, for all practical purposes, the sole big employer (including railways), and a vast bureaucratic machine was built up, strictly managed and controlled at the top. This enormous patronage was exercised to strengthen the British hold on the country, to crush discordant and disagreeable elements, and to promote rivalry and discord amongst various groups anxiously looking forward to employment in government service. It led to demoralization and conflict, and the government could play one group against the other.

The policy of balance and counterpoise was deliberately furthered in the Indian army. Various groups were so arranged as to prevent any sentiment of national unity growing up amongst them, and tribal and communal loyalties and slogans were encouraged. Every effort was made to isolate the army from the people and even ordinary newspapers were not allowed to reach the Indian troops. All the key positions were kept in the hands of Englishmen and no Indian could hold the King's commission. A raw English subaltern was senior to the oldest and most experienced Indian noncommissioned officer or those holding the so-called Viceroy's commissions. No Indian could be employed in Army Headquarters except as a petty clerk in the accounts department. For additional protection the more effective weapons of warfare were not given to the Indian forces; they were reserved for the British troops in India. These British troops were always kept with the Indian regiments in all the vital centres of India to serve as 'Internal Security Troops' for suppression of disorder and to overawe the people. While this internal army, with a predominance of British personnel, served as an army of occupation for the country, the greater portion of the Indian troops were part of the Field Army organized for service abroad. The Indian troops were recruited from special classes only, chiefly in northern India, which were called martial classes.

Again we notice in India that inherent contradiction in British rule. Having brought about the political unification of the country and thus let loose new dynamic forces which thought not only in terms of that unity but aimed at the freedom of India, the British Government tried to disrupt that very unity it had helped to create. That disruption was not thought of in political terms then as a splitting up of India: it was aimed at the weakening of nationalist elements so that British rule might continue over the whole country. But it was nonetheless an attempt at disruption, by giving greater importance to the Indian States than they had ever had before, by encouraging reactionary elements and looking to them for support, by promoting divisions and encouraging one group against another, by encouraging fissiparous tendencies due to religion or province, and by organizing Quisling classes which were afraid of a change which might engulf them. All this was a natural and understandable policy for a foreign imperialist power to pursue, and it is a little naive to be surprised at it, harmful from the Indian nationalist point of view though it was. But the fact that it was so must be remembered if we are to understand subsequent developments. Out of this policy arose those 'important elements in India's national life' of which we are reminded so often today; which were created and encouraged to disagree and disrupt, and are now called upon to agree among themselves.

Because of this natural alliance of the British Power with the reactionaries in India, it became the guardian and upholder of many an evil custom and practice, which it otherwise condemned. India was custom-ridden when the British came, and the tyranny of old custom is often a terrible thing. Yet customs change and

are forced to adapt themselves to some extent to a changing environment. Hindu law was largely custom and as custom changed, the law also was applied in a different way. Indeed there was no provision of Hindu law which could not be changed by custom. The British replaced this elastic customary law by judicial decisions based on the old texts, and these decisions became precedents which had to be rigidly followed. That was, in theory, an advantage as it produced greater uniformity and certainty. But, in the manner it was done, it resulted in the perpetuation of the ancient law unmodified by subsequent customs. Thus the old law which, in some particulars and in various places, had been changed by custom and was thus out-of-date, was petrified, and every tendency to change it in the well-known customary way was suppressed. It was still open to group to prove a custom overriding the law but this was extraordinarily difficult in the law courts. Change could only come by positive legislation, but the British Government, which was the legislating authority, had no wish to antagonize the conservative elements on whose support it counted. When later some legislative powers were given to partially elected assemblies, every attempt to promote social reform legislation was frowned upon by the authorities and sternly discouraged.

3. RACIALISM UNDER THE BRITISH

The Ideology of Empire: The New Caste

(Nehru)

Gopal Krishna Gokhale once wrote in his gently ironical way of the inscrutable wisdom of Province which had ordained the British connection for India. Whether it was due to this inscrutable wisdom or some process of historic destiny of just chance, the coming of the British to India brought two very different races together. Or, at any rate, it should have brought them together, but as it happened they seldom approached each other and their contacts were indirect. English literature and English political thought influenced a tiny fringe of those who had learned English. But this political thought, though dynamic in its context, had no reality in India then. The British who came to India were not political or social revolutionaries; they were conservatives representing the most reactionary social class in England, and England was in some ways one of the most conservative countries of Europe.

The impact of Western culture on India was the impact of a dynamic society, of a 'modern' consciousness, on a static society wedded to medieval habits of thought which however sophisticated and advanced in its own way, could not progress because of its inherent limitations. And yet, curiously enough, the agents of this historic process were not only wholly unconscious of their mission in India but, as a class, actually represented no such process. In England their class fought this historic process but the forces opposed to them were too strong for them and could not be held back. In India they had a free field and were successful in applying the brakes to that very change and progress which, in the larger context, they represented. They encouraged and consolidated the position of the socially reactionary groups in India, and opposed all those who worked for political and social change. If change came, it was in spite of them or as an incidental and unexpected consequence of their other activities. The introduction of the steam engine and the railway was a big step towards a change of the medieval structure, but it was intended to consolidate their rule and facilitate the exploitation, for their own benefit, of the interior of the country. This contradiction between the deliberate policy of the British authorities in India and some of its unintended consequences produces a certain confusion and masks that policy itself. Change came to India because of this impact of the West, but it came almost inspite of the British in India. They succeeded in slowing down the pace of that change to such an extent that even today the transition is very far from complete.

The feudal landlords and their kind who came from England to rule over India had the landlord's view of the world. To them India was a vast estate belonging to the East India Company, and the landlord was the best and the natural representative of his estate and his tenants. That

1. Discovery of India by Nehru

view continued even after the East India Company handed over its estate of India to the British Crown, being paid very handsome compensation at India's cost. (Thus began the public debt of India. It was India's purchase money, paid by India). The British Goverment of India then became the landlords (or landlords' agents). For all practical purposes they considered themselves 'India', just as the Duke of Devonshire might be considered 'Devonshire' by his peers. The millions of people who lived and functioned in India were just some kind of landlord's tenants who had to pay their rents and cesses and to keep their place in the natural feudal order. For them a challenge to that order was an offence against the very moral basis of the universe and a denial of a divine dispensation.

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This sense of identifying India with their own interests was strongest in the higher administrative services which were entirely British. In later years these developed in that close and well-knit corporation called the Indian Civil Service, 'the world's most tenacious trade union', as it has been called by an English writer. They ran India, they were India, and anything that was harmful to their interests must of necessity be injurious to India. From the Indian Civil Service and the kind of history and record of current events that was placed before them, this conception spread in varying degrees to the different strata of the British people. The ruling class naturally shared it in full measure but even the worker and the farmer were influenced by it to some slight extent and felt, inspite of their own subordinate position in their own country, the pride of possession and empire. That same worker or farmer if he came to India inevitably belonged to the ruling class here. He was totally ignorant of India's history and culture and he accepted the prevailing ideology of the British in India for he had no other standards to judge by or apply. At the most a vague benevolence filled him but that was strictly conditioned within that framework. For a hundred years this ideology permeated all sections of the British people and became, as it were, a national heritage, a fixed and almost unalterable notion, which governed their outlook on India and imperceptibly affected even their domestic outlook. In our own day that curious group which has no fixed standards or principles or much knowledge of the outside world, the leaders of the British Labour Party, have usually been the staunchest supporters of the existing order in India. Sometimes a vague sense of uneasiness fills them at a seeming contradiction between their domestic and colonial policy, between their professions and practice, but considering themselves above all as practical men of common sense, they sternly repress all these stirrings of conscience. Practical men must necessarily base themselves on established and known practice, on existing conditions, and not take a leap into the dark unknown merely because of some principle or untested theory.

Viceroys who come to India direct from England have to fit in with and rely upon the Indian Civil Service structure. Belonging to the possessing and ruling class in England, they have no difficulty whatever in accepting the prevailing I. C. S. outlook, and their unique position of absolute authority, unparalleled elsewhere, leads to subtle changes in their ways and methods of expression. Authority corrupts and absolute authority corrupts absolutely, and no man in the wide world today has had or has such absolute authority over such large numbers of people as the British Viceroy of India. The Viceroy speaks in a manner such as no Prime Minister of England or President of the United States can adopt. The only possible parallel would be that of Hitler. And not the Viceroy only but the British members of his Council, the Governors, and even the smaller fry who function as secretaries of departments or magistrates. They speak from a noble and unattainable height, secure not only in the conviction that what they say and do is right but that it will have to be accepted as right, whatever lesser mortals may imagine, for theirs is the power and glory.

Some members of the Viceroy's Council are appointed direct from England and do not belong to the Indian Civil Service. There is usually a

marked difference in their ways and utterances from those of the Civil Service. They function easily enough in that framework but they cannot quite develop that superior and self-satisfied air of assured authority. Much less can the Indian members of the Council (a fairly recent addition), who are obvious supers, whatever their numbers or intelligence. Indians belonging to the Civil Service, whatever their rank in the official hierarch, do not belong to the charmed circle. A few of them try to ape the manners of their colleagues without much success: they become rather pompous and ridiculous.

The new generation of British members of the Indian Civil Service are, I believe, somewhat different in mind and texture from their predecessors. They do not easily fit into the old framework but all authority and policy flow from the senior members and the new-comers make no difference. They have either to accept the established church or, as has sometimes happened, resign and return to their homeland.

I remember that when I was a boy the British-owned newspapers in India were full of official news and utterances: of service news, transfers and promotions: of the doings of English society, of polo, races, dances and amateur theatricals. There was hardly a word about the people of India, about their political, cultural, social or economic life. Reading them one would hardly suspect that they existed.

In Bombay there used to be quadrangular cricket matches between four elevens made up respectively of Hindus, Moslems, Parsis and Europeans. The Europeans eleven was called 'Bombay Presidency', the others were just Hindus, Moslems, Parsis. Bombay was thus essentially represented by the Europeans: the others, one would imagine, were foreign elements who were recognized for this purpose. These quadrangular matches still take place, though there is much argument about them and a demand that elevens should not be chosen on religious lines. I believe that the 'Bombay Presidency' team is now called 'European'.

English clubs in India usually have territorial names—the Bengal Club, the Allahabad Club, etc. They are confined to Britishers, or rather to Europeans.

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Racialism in India is not so much English versus Indian. It is European as opposed to the Asian. In India every European, be he German or Pole or Rumanian, is automatically a member of the ruling race. Railway carriages, station retiring rooms, benches in parks etc., are marked 'For European Only'. This is bad enough in South Africa or elsewhere but to have to put up with it in one's own country is a humiliating and exasperating reminder of our enslaved condition.

It is true that a gradual change has been taking place in these external manifestations of racial superiority and imperial arrogance. But the process is slow and frequent instances occur to show how superficial it is. Political pressure and the rise of a militant nationalism enforces change and leads to a deliberate attempt to tone down the former racialism and aggressiveness; and yet that very political movement, when it reaches a stage of crisis and is sought to be crushed, leads to a resurgence of all the old imperialist and racial arrogance in its extremist form.

The English are a sensitive people and yet, when they go to foreign countries, there is a strange lack of awareness about them. In India, where the relation of ruler and ruled makes mutual understanding difficult, this lack of awareness is peculiarly evident. Almost, one would think that it is deliberate, so that they may see only what they want to see and be blind to all else. But facts do not vanish because they are ignored, and when they compel attention, there is a feeling of displeasure and resentment at the unexpected happening, as of some trick having been played.

In this land of caste the British, and more especially the Indian Civil Service, have built up a caste which is rigid and exclusive. Even the Indian members of the Service do not really belong to that caste though they wear its insignia and conform to its rules. That caste has developed

something in the nature of a religious faith in its own paramount importance, and round that faith has grown an appropriate mythology which helps to maintain it. A combination of faith and vested interests is a powerful one and any challenge to it arouses the deepest passions and fierce indignation.

4. HOW FAR INDIAN NATIONALISM IS A PRODUCT OF BRITISH RULE.

(Shri Hiranlranath Mukerjee)

Apologists of imperialism these days rarely speak in the flamboyant vein of a Winston Churchill with his impudent slogan of "We hold what we have", or a Joynson-Hicks who said: "We conquered India by the sword and by the sword we shall hold it. We hold it as the finest outlet for British goods." They take, as a rule, a subtler line, and intend our people to regard imperialism as their guide and tutor in a gentle movement towards a vague and undefined self-government. English history, they tell us, "taught the lesson of the gradual acquisition of popular liberties, English political thought as expressed by Burke and Mill reinforced that lesson." Here indeed, is a patronising claim to take Indian nationalism under the wing of imperialism as its own foster-child, and a pernicious and utterly unfounded theory of the beneficent mission of imperialism. These sanctimonious spokesmen of an ugly ideology should be told without ceremony that the democratic evolution of the modern age is not Britain's patented secret[1] that the great French Revolution, the American War of Independence, freedom movements on the Continent of Europe, and not least of all in Britain's neighbour Ireland, and the twentieth-century Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917, have played a great role in generating and sustaining the militant consciousness of all colonial peoples; nineteenth century took no little note of the world current, as Ram Mohan Roy's enthusiasm for the principles of the French Revolution testifies; that the notion that India's resurgence was impossible without benevolent British interposition is fatuous and false, as the example of China, never so completely cowed as India has been by foreign imperialism, proves to the hilt; and that the Indian National Movement arose, as it only could, from India's social conditions, from the social and economic forces generated in Indian life under the conditions of imperialism and its many-fanged system of exploitation.

Indian nationalism has been no offspring of British rule, though certainly it emerged out of conditions established thereby. Tsarist autocracy set in motion forces which ultimately brought about the victory of the working class of Russia. Fascist Japan helped by its aggression to weld a firmer national unity of China's people. British rule in India, similarly, if it wishes to claim any "credit" for Indian nationalism, is entitled to what Tsarism can claim in relation to the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union.

Not only Conservatives, but Liberal spokesmen in the early days of British rule in India, never dared the view that they were training Indian people for self-government. "We know that India cannot have a free government. But she may have the next best thing—a firm and impartial despotism". "In India, you cannot have representative institutions." These are words of Macaulay, alleged "mentor" of Indian nationalists! John Stuart Mill, famed champion of representative Government was reported by Macaulay to have said before a House of Commons Committee that his recipe was "utterly out of the question" in India. That "liberal and 'radical' scroundrel", as Lenin described him John Morley—said in the House of Lords as late as 1908 apropos of the Minto-Morley reforms: "If it could be said that this chapter of reforms led directly or indirectly to the establishment of a parliamentary system in India, I for one would have nothing at all to do with it." Lord Cromer, Anglo-Saxon authority on "Ancient and Modern Imperialism" wrote in that fatuous volume (1910): "The idea (self-Government for India) is not only absurd; it is not only impracticable. I would go further and say that to entertain it would be a crime against civilisation, and especially against the voiceless millions in India whose interests are committed to our charge." Cromer was a

1. Discovery of India by Nehru

conservative, but he and Morley played variations of the same theme.

Broken British pledges, as India knows too well, are strewn all over recent Indian history.

In the early sixties of the last century, Sir John (afterwards Lord) Lawrence wrote in a letter to Sir Erskine Perry: "If anything is done or attempted to be done, to help the natives, a general howl is raised which reverberates in England, and finds sympathy and support there. Everyone is, in the abstract, for justice, moderation and such excellent qualities; but when one comes to apply such principles so as to affect anybody's interests, then a change comes over them." Lord Lytton, Viceroy of India, 1876-80, in a famous, "confidential" letter to the then Secretary of State, wrote: "We all know that these claims and expectations (of complete equality and admission to offices as promised by the Proclamation of 1858) never can or will be fulfilled. We had the choice between prohibiting them, and cheating them, and we have chosen the least straightforward course The Government of England and of India appear to me.....unable to answer satisfactorily the charge of having taken every means in their power of breaking to the heart the words of promise they have uttered to the ear." Lord Salisbury in his downright fashion characterised British pledges to India as "political hypocrisy", and he was perfectly right.

Many examples can be given of this perfidy which not all the paid publicists of imperialism can whitewash. "I can see no period when India can dispense with the guidance and assistance of this small nucleus of the British Civil Service the steel frame of the whole structure": This was what Lloyd George, the Liberal, said in a notorious 1922 speech. "No one had the right to tell the people of India that they were likely in any near period to attain Dominion Status": this was what Birkenhead, former Secretary of State for India, said in November 1929, a month after the Viceroy Lord Irwin's declaration that "the natural issue of India's constitutional progress" was "Dominion Status".

In December 1934, Stanley Baldwin boasted: "You have a good chance of keeping the whole of that sub-Continent of India in the Empire for ever", and in 1935 broadcasting on the latest Government of India "Reforms", said categorically that the British in India "will have the duty and the means to ensure, if need be, that political power is exercised by Indian Ministers and Legislatures for the purposes that we intend." The enforced participation of India in the imperialist war which broke out in September 1939, and the unprecedented and savage repression let loose in India in August 1942, and succeeding months, are all in line with the imperialist Britain's policy. Its latest mouthpiece who promises also to be the last—the redoubtable Winston Churchill, had the audacity to boast that he had not become the King's First Minister "to preside over the liquidation of the Empire".

Defenders of imperialism in Britain have had support also from certain "socialist" circles which Lenin once called "swinish". In this category can be placed Ramsay MacDonald, whose ghost hovers still over Labour's colonial policy, and even "advanced" thinkers like the group represented by the Glasgow "Forward". The line taken by the latter is subtler and therefore to be resisted all the more. As a sample of its propaganda, could be quoted "Forward's" comments on June 9, 1928: "Hassan and Chandra are not robbed and starved because a British Viceroy sits in a lodge in Calcutta; were he supplanted to-morrow by the Maharajah of Burdwan or a Tata billionaire from Jamshedpur, the ryot would know no difference". The effrontery of this "Socialist" sophistry is just too contemptible. The "Socialist" is so "uncompromising in his hostility to the Indian exploiters and so concerned to warn the Indian masses against a united front with their own bourgeoisie for national liberation, that he forms a united front with his own exploiting class to maintain the subjection." (R. P. Dutt.)

Let there be no mistake about it: Britain performed in India a service of destruction, but the construction, except in haphazard, unwilling irritating patches, has been and will have to be the work of Indian themselves.

I came reluctantly to the conclusion that the British connection had made India more helpless than she ever was before, politically and economically. A disarmed India has no power of resistance against any aggressor if she wanted to engage in an armed conflict with him. So much is this the case that some of our best men consider that India must take generations before she can achieve the Dominion status. She has become so poor that she has little power of resisting famines.

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The law itself in this country has been used to serve the foreign exploiter. My unbiased examination of the Punjab Martial Law cases has led me to believe that at least ninety-five per cent of convictions were wholly bad. My experience of political cases in India leads me to the conclusion that in nine out of every ten the condemned men were totally innocent. Their crime consisted in their love of their country. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, justice has been denied to Indians as against Europeans in the Courts of India.

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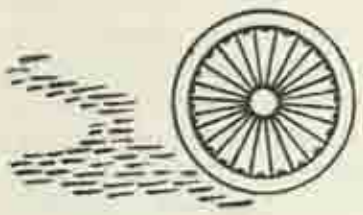
The greater misfortune is that the Englishmen and their Indian associates in the administration of the country do not know that they are engaged in the crime I have attempted to describe. I am satisfied that many Englishmen and Indian officials honestly believe that they are administering one of the best systems devised in the world, and that India is making steady, though slow, progress. They do not know that a subtle but effective system of terrorism, together with an organized display of force on the one hand, and the deprivation of all powers of retaliation or self-defence on the other, have emasculated the people and induced in them the habit of simulation. This awful habit has added to the ignorance and the self-deception of the administrators.

(*Gandhiji*: THE TRIAL SPEECH, 1922)



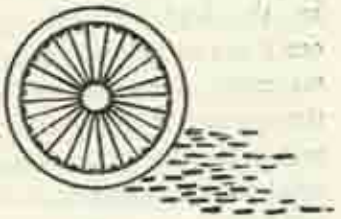
BOOK III

BIRTH AND GROWTH OF THE CONGRESS



CHAPTER XIII

NATIONAL MOVEMENT FOR FREEDOM IN INDIA—A RETROSPECT



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THE Indian national movement is primarily a movement for freedom from alien domination. Historically, it has been one continuous process commencing with the establishment of British rule in India. The national movement has been one comprehensive effort embracing all aspects of the life of the community. It was naturally so, for British domination over India has not been merely political. The British sway has not only led to the ousting or subjugating of the many independent states which had emerged on the decline of the Mughal Empire, but has effected a far-reaching transformation in the social, economic, and cultural life and traditions of the country. The new administrative system has disrupted the foundations of social structure, the educational system has brought about a cultural revolution and the economic policy has produced changes of great magnitude in the commercial, industrial and agricultural pursuits of the people. Above all, the fact of foreign rule has affected the psychology of the governed and has shaken the very moral foundations of the society. Therefore, the national movement growing out of the clash between the British and Indian political and economic systems has tended to develop into one all out effort for emancipation, economic, social, religious and cultural, from the dead weight of imperialism. Its main object has been the establishment of a free democratic state, stimulating at the same time a renaissance which aims at the purging of Indian culture of exotic influences which checked its growth and mutilated its form. It has synchronised with a period of great constructive activity. A vast store of creative energy has been released which galvanised the rise of a multilateral movement for freedom. This national movement in its political aspect has aimed at substituting democratic parliamentary government of the Indian people for bureaucratic administration directed from Whitehall. In its economic and cultural aspects it has been directed at making the country economically independent and culturally free from the incubus of foreign domination.

The progress of the British empire in India has been phenomenal and rapid, but it will be incorrect to assume that the surging tide of foreign dominion at any stage was unaccompanied by resistance. In early days opposition was offered by organised territorial sovereignties which were the victims of imperialist aggression. Not only did they not succumb without resistance individually, but at times projects of concerted action and joint resistance were also entertained or executed. History is eloquent about many such attempts both at the end of the eighteenth century when the

Marathas had not been finally humbled and at the beginning of the nineteenth century when Ranjit Singh was in the fullness of his glory or some Maratha princes were smarting with the anguish of the fast developing shadow of subjection and were furiously gnawing at the leash which held them. Later when these independent local sovereignties were swept away, resistance wastaken by the feudal aristocracy which in many parts could not submit without resistance to the laws and measures adopted by an alien bureaucracy to sweep the country of all eminences. This new leadership met with the tacit support of the princes on the one hand, and with the enthusiastic and devoted collaboration on the other, of the common man who was being steadily reduced to a position of economic helotry owing to the pursuit of an imperialistic policy of economic exploitation by the rulers. This effort culminated in the great war of independence, the so-called 'Mutiny' or the 'Great Rebellion' of 1857. 'Elements of revolt' were always present and in the words of C. F. Andrews, 'underlying the acquiescence in British rule, the humiliation of subjection to the foreigners was ever keenly felt.' The 'Rebellion' therefore, though apparently unorganised and sporadic, was a deliberate and conscious attempt of the middle class to demolish the whole structure of cultural, economic and political domination of the alien. It is true that the entire country was not equally prepared or organised for the revolt. But its rumblings were heard far and wide and were not confined either to any one locality or to any one class or community. Nonetheless, it failed to achieve its purpose, and the failure of the old middle class brought forth to the surface, national resistance of a new class, which invoked a vast popular agitation, but by varied method and new technique. A violent, political, upper class movement for freedom had failed in its object and the way was now prepared for the rise of a popular movement led by the intellectuals who adopted the new goal of parliamentary self-government and had as their weapons the whole armoury of popular agitation.

This continuous process of a dynamic movement entered a new phase when the constitutional movement of the intellectuals was reinforced by the accretion of the masses whose interests and aspirations gave a new content and fresh vigour to the national movement for freedom. In the hands of Mahatma Gandhi the rising tide of national mass movement gathered fresh momentum with its demand for Swaraj. Swaraj was not merely a slogan for a constitutional state with its concrete expression in a parliamentary government, but it stood for that stage of progress in which the individual would be master of himself and fullest scope for his realisation would be possible. Thus from one stage to another, while the technique has changed or the content of nationalism has expanded, the continuity of the process has been maintained and its fundamental basis, struggle for freedom from foreign yoke, has continued unaltered.

The national freedom movement has also been a comprehensive movement embracing all the aspects of the community's activity. While on one side the struggle for political existence was continuing, a great cultural and social movement was also developing which aimed at welding the component units into one harmonious whole, purging the society of all the evils which disfigured it, integrating the religious life to a unity and reinvigorating the cultural standards in art, literature and behaviour to withstand the onslaught of Western Renaissance materialism. Long before the Mutiny a wave of religious reformism or revivalism had been set in motion which had its inspiration in Vedanta or Sufism and shunned ritualism. In these protestant sects there was room for all, Hindus and Muslims, whose creed was devotion to the guru (teacher) and faith in the ethical fundamentals of religion. And when the Christian missions began their activities, reformist faiths like Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj or Wahabism accepted the challenge, and stemmed the tide of Westernism by reinfusing faith in national culture and ancient glory. This diversion of the gaze to the glorious past not only linked the present with the past but imparted to the national movement the character of indigenus evolution and protected it from exotic influences alien to the soil. Religion, culture, society, all these were influenced by the new spirit. They

were all invigorated by the new inspiration which blossomed forth in an unprecedented activity enriching the content of national culture, its art, literature and philosophy, a virtual renaissance which had its roots in the past and which telescoped ancient traditions into modern conditions.

A duality of main trends is traceable in the course of the development of national movement—constitutionalism and revolution, or modernism and revivalism. The Indian movement resembles its Chinese counterpart in this element—Western education activised by the impact with Western liberal thought and civilisation had a dazzling glamour for the men of earlier generations who were profoundly influenced by Western political doctrines enunciated by Rousseau and Voltaire, or Burke and Mill. British history and constitution, or the revolutionary experiences of France, or the struggle for independence of America and Ireland, or the national movements of Italy and Hungary, inspired the youth of the nineteenth century with genuine admiration for Western culture, literature, science, and above all its political institutions. The cultivation of English language and transplantation of English parliamentary institutions became the obsession of the leaders. This wave of modernism stimulated the process of constitutionalism which at different stages characterises the movement for freedom. But modernism was accompanied by its anti-thesis of revivalism. In the words of Dr. Beni Prasad, 'revivalism was partial restoration of the self-respect which political subjection had deeply injured. It represented at once resistance to Western encroachment, recompense for the present degradation, and a hope for a reign of righteousness in the future'. Revivalism is eminently a movement for 'back to the past', 'a hark back to the invigorating purity of ancient religion, and organisation'. India like China has a glorious past, a golden age of culture and civilisation, to which it was natural to turn for inspiration and consolation in the period of gloom of national degradation and political subjection. National self-consciousness revived, and it began to repudiate whatever was foreign, an inevitable reaction to alien domination. Pride in the past generated confidence in the present. Self-confidence involved self-determination and had in its womb the seeds of revolution. Whereas early modernism bred a spirit of constitutionalism, with its concomitants of apprenticeship, 'mendicancy' and socio-political evolution, revivalism produced a psychology of revolution which believed in wresting power by mobilising the moral and material resources of the community and kindling the fire of freedom in the people by rousing their consciousness of innate strength, and overthrowing the existing socio-political structure, born of imperialist domination, by a rising of the masses. This revivalist, revolutionary movement is not isolationist in its creed, but being essentially anti-imperialist has sought co-operation with similar national movements elsewhere in Asia. Constitutionalism and revolution have alternated in the past development of nationalism and have determined its form and technique of operation.

When the first wave of organised resistance to the surging tide of foreign domination had consumed itself, and before the violent mass rising, the 'Great Rebellion', had expressed itself, an evolutionary movement had started its career, with its programme of social and religious reform, cultivation of English language and thought, and reasoned appeal for the introduction of elementary civic rights like freedom of the press and representative institutions. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was the apostle of this creed. He had a genuine admiration for Western culture and English liberalism and had absolute faith in the righteous intentions of the British rulers. He advocated the path of constitutionalism and strove for the eradication of social evils and religious abuses. A few local political associations which then came into being took up this theme and prayed for the introduction of a representative legislative authority in India. But before this middle class intellectual evolutionary movement for constitutional development and social reform based on the new educational stimulus could make headway, the seismic revolutionary effort, born of discontent, swept a large surface of the country and wrecked the structure of constitutionalism even before its foundations were laid.

The 'Great Rebellion' was suppressed in a torrent of blood which left behind bitter memories of racial antagonism. Alien imperialism entrenched itself anew by rivetting the fetters of slavery on the Indian people and seeking new allies in feudal aristocracy and diehard reactionaries who 'were to act in the future as the servile and despised agents of imperialism'. But economic discontent and humiliation of defeat as well as the arrogance of the conqueror kept alive the flame of resistance to foreign domination, even though at times the flame did not burn brightly. Racial hatred economic suffering and administrative callousness soon revived the spirit of revolt and kept awake the movement for freedom, which adopted the dual character of demand for constitutional reforms and of secret, sporadic violent sectional or local attempts for the overthrow of foreign yoke. By its very nature the latter effort could not thrive in the situation created by the suppression of the 'Great Rebellion', but it is on record that it had within two decades assumed proportions which did not fail to alarm the rulers. The Wahali revolt was but one serious manifestation of this revolutionary spirit which had its votaries in other sections and diverse places. However, before it could be ripe enough to burst into flame a peaceful movement with a technique of popular agitation and the objective of constitutional reforms progressively achieved, had found its source and soon developed into a mighty torrent which absorbed the whole political energy of the people.

Local political associations sprouted up in Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Poona and Lahore, some of the chief towns of the country, with the purpose of focussing public opinion on the acts of local administration and exerting organised pressure on the Government to redress grievances. The Indian Press became an active agent of such constitutional agitation. These local associations had similar objects, and within a few years in the seventies by their efforts 'public life was beginning to make itself felt by the authorities though it was not well organised'. A number of eminent leaders had also emerged who by their learning, devotion and sacrifice had acquired a hold on the public mind. But there was no All-India organisation which could speak with one voice on matters of All-India importance and deal effectively with the supreme Government. In 1876, the Indian Association was founded in Calcutta with, perhaps, the intention of converting it into an All-India organisation. The administration of Lord Lytton with its emphasis on reaction and imperialism, as characterised by the Vernacular Press Act, the Afghan War, the Durbar and the assumption of the title of Empress of India by the Queen of England aggravated suffering and provoked national resentment. Subsequently, reduction of age for admission to the Indian Civil Service, and the vehement Anglo-Indian hostility to the Ilbert Bill which sought to provide judicial equality between the European and the Indian, revealed the immediate necessity of a political organisation which could espouse the country's cause. Surendra Nath Banerji's lecture tour on the I.C.S. age issue mobilised political opinion and created contacts. While, thus, the stage was being set for the establishment of an All-India political organisation, Octave Hume, alarmed by the rising tide of discontent and secret revolutionary sentiment in the country, on the advice of the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, and with the approval of some leading politicians of the country, resolved to form in 1884 an Indian National Union which would perform 'the functions which Her Majesty's Opposition did in England' and whose keynote was 'unswerving loyalty to the British Crown'. The first conference of this Union was scheduled to be held in Poona in the Christmas week of 1885. The meeting was, however, held in Bombay and the name of the Indian National Congress was given to it. Its main objects were laid down as follows :—

(a) The promotion of personal intimacy and friendship amongst all the more earnest workers in our country's cause in the various parts of the Empire.

(b) The eradication, by direct friendly personal intercourse, of all possible race, creed or provincial prejudices amongst all lovers of our country and the fuller development and consolidation of sentiments of national unity.

(c) The authoritative record, after this has been carefully elicited by the fullest discussion, of the matured opinions of the educated classes in India on some of the more important and pressing of the social questions of the day.

(d) The determination of the lines upon and methods by which during the next twelve months it is desirable for native politicians to labour in the public interests.

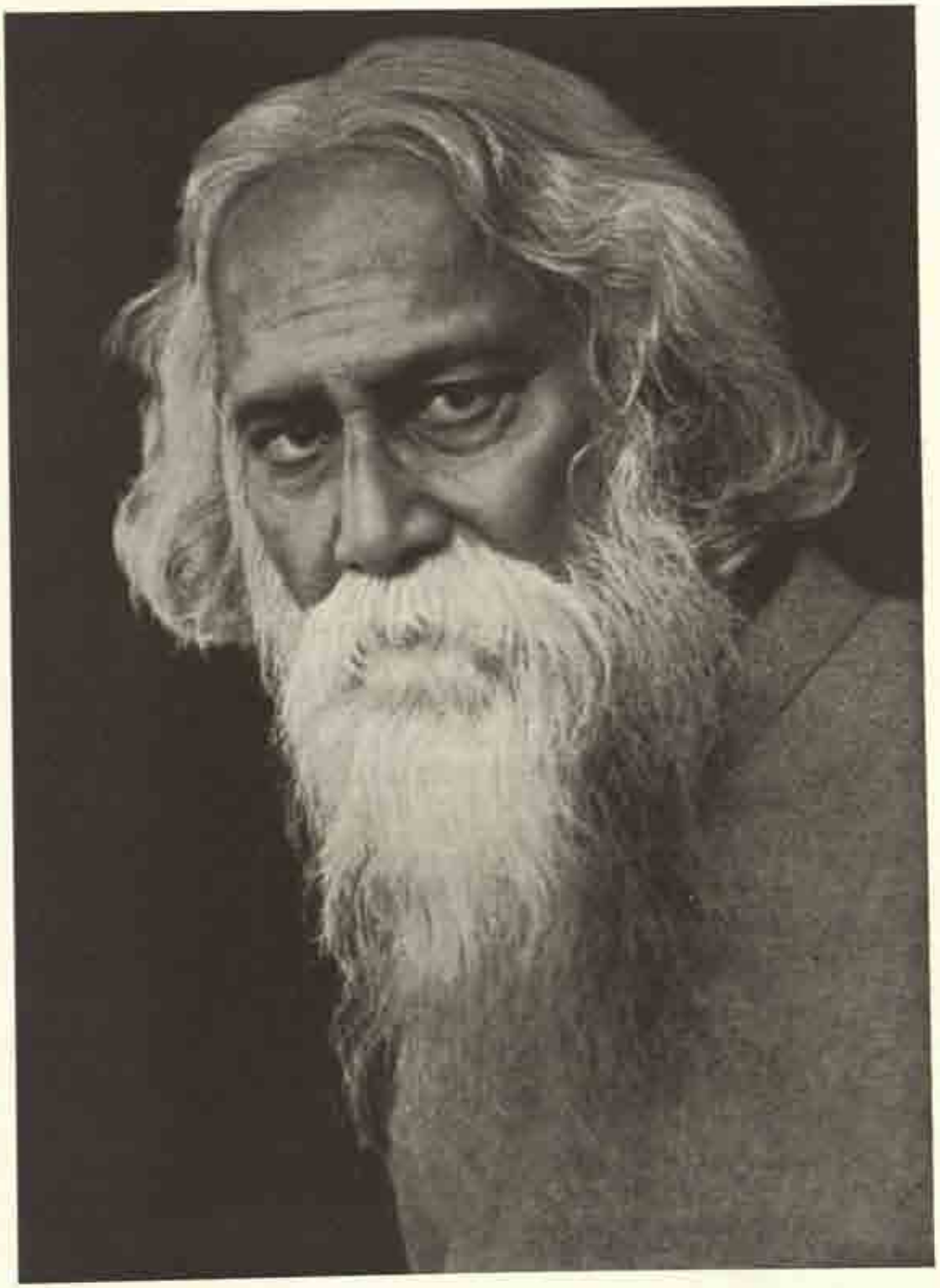
It was also emphasised that the Congress 'shall be prepared when necessary, to oppose by all constitutional methods all authorities, high or low, here or in England, whose acts and omissions are opposed to those principles of the Government of India as laid down from time to time by the British Parliament and endorsed by the British Sovereign'.

In these humble beginnings the Indian National Congress had its birth. It was not intended to supersede the local political organisations. It had no definite creed or programme of political action. At best, it started as a social gathering of earnest political workers who commanded influence and who now desired to unite their individual voices to make them audible to the authorities that be. Loyalty to the Crown, unshaken belief in British connection with India, genuine respect for English culture and unfathomed faith in the Briton's sense of justice and fairplay were the sheet anchor of the new Congress. It stood for national unity transcending provincial prejudices and sectional loyalties. Its vision, however, at the time was confined to administrative reforms and the expansion of the legislative councils. The resolutions adopted by the first Congress not only indicated the character of the new organisation but also determined the lines on which work could proceed in the future. Demand for a Royal Commission to enquire into the working of Indian administration, for the abolition of the Indian council, for the introduction of elected element into the Legislative Councils with the right of interpellation, and creation of new provincial councils, and for simultaneous examinations for the I.C.S., were the chief political demands set forth by it in 1885. The other resolutions related to the reduction of military expenditure and the protest against the annexation of Burma and its proposed incorporation with India.

The starting of the Indian National Congress was not heralded by a fan-fare of trumpets, and it did not create a stir by passing flamboyant resolutions denouncing British rule and calling upon the people to rise in open revolt in the name of independence. But it will be clear from the content of the first resolutions that the Congress stood for democratic representative government in which the Executive should be accountable to the Legislature for its action, and gradual relaxation of British control over India which is expressed in its proposal for the abolition of the India Council. In 1908, 'the attainment of a system of government similar to that enjoyed by the self-governing members of the British Empire' was declared as the objective of the Indian National Congress. It was anti-Imperialist in character and sincerely resented the incorporation of Burma with India. It had the good of the people at heart for it opposed high taxation and prayed for the reduction of military expenditure to relieve the burden of the oppressed peasantry. In subsequent years, its insistence on permanent settlement of land revenue, reduction of salt tax, liberalising of Forest laws and reduction of military expenditure and heavy taxation to relieve the people and protect them from the recurring scourge of famines, gave ample evidence of its solicitousness for the welfare of the people and made it more and more a popular political institution. Year after year, the Congress exposed the unpopular aspects of administration and prescribed the reform and expansion of Legislative Councils, or the establishment of representative institutions, as panacea for existing evils. Indianisation of services was another major item in its scheme of agitation. In the nineties, the conditions of Indians in the British Colonies aroused bitter comment and the Congress did not fail to marshal public opinion against this racial

inequality and national humiliation. In the early years of its adolescence, thus, the Congress developed into a symbol of national aspirations, hopes and fears and succeeded in determining the direction of national political activity. Constitutional agitation was its technique, prayerful appeal to the sense of justice of the rulers its method, and the preparation for colonial self-government its objective. But even inspite of its moderation, the Congress far from being a mere Her Majesty's Government's Opposition enjoying official favour, soon courted the hostility of the bureaucracy and merited official frown. 'Imperialism feared the progressive potentialities of the Congress'. The Government did not, therefore, shrink from obstructing its path and expressing its displeasure at the turn of events. Official opposition, however, came to be a boon for the Congress as it now gradually adopted the role of a peoples' organisation which evoked the sympathy and sentiment of the masses.

The moderation of the Congress would have been a stable reality, if the Government were responsive to its prayers. But unfortunately there was a succession of reactionary Viceroys and conservative Cabinets, and though constitutional reforms materialised, their pace was so slow and their content was so disappointing that every fresh advance lagged far behind the Congress demand. 'Jingoism' became the creed of the rulers. Frontier wars, recurring famines, imperialistic fiscal policy and unsympathetic administration, all combined to aggravate poverty and enhance discontent. The failure of the Congress, therefore, to open the gates of a golden vision shattered faith in its mendicant policy and placed a premium on extremism. The revolutionary phase which had been temporarily shelved by the birth of the Congress gathered momentum, and its flame were continually fed by mounting repression which a reactionary alien bureaucracy employed to scotch the 'extremist' sentiment. Old rusty weapons of repression such as Regulation III of 1818 were now sharpened to stifle the new militant nationalism. But no effort was made to suit the administration to the growing temper of the people. And as for political progress, not even a liberal Secretary of State, Lord Morley, could contemplate the introduction of Parliamentary Government in this land. This marked antagonism between the reality of the British administrative system and the aspirations of the Indian people was the compelling motive force of political radicalism which threw out leaders like Tilak, Lajpat Rai, Arbindo Ghosh or Bepin Chandra Pal. The 'inevitability of gradualness' of the political movement in the hands of the older leaders aggravated the exasperation of the people who had no patience with modernism and who were demonstrating their resolve to seek their own salvation and discard the method of 'mendicancy' which had been employed by the Congress. They were heartened by the consciousness of the superiority of their culture, philosophy and religion. They were encouraged in their determination by the discomfiture of Italy at Adowa or the overthrow of Russia in the Far East by Japan. The myth of the invincibility of the European was now exploded. At a time when the spirit of the people was high, when revivalism was active and when the sense of national self-respect had revived, Lord Curzon decided on the partition of Bengal and threw a challenge to the new militant nationalism. The gauntlet was taken up. The technique of mass meetings and press agitation, so successfully developed in Western India by Tilak, the spirit of sacrifice defying the fear of prison and the lesson of western revolutionary nationalism adopting terrorism as its weapon of war, were used with effective force in Bengal to unsettle the settled fact of partition. Indian nationalism employed the rod of boycott and Swadeshi to beat British Imperialism. Even the moderate Congress was compelled by the growing tide of public opinion to forge swaraj as its objective. National Education and economic self-sufficiency became the new instruments of nationalism in its fight against repressive bureaucracy. Above all, even the cult of the bomb and the pistol was not neglected and many young men smilingly ascended the scaffold as early sacrifices at the alter of freedom. The Bengal partition was annulled, another moderate dose of constitutional reform was administered, and repression was promiscuously employed, but the wave of extremism could not be wholly



RABINDRA NATH TAGORE

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Where the mind is without fear
and the head is held high;
Where knowledge is free;
Where the world has not been broken
up into fragments by narrow domestic
walls;
Where words come out from the
depth of truth;
Where tireless striving
stretches its arms towards
perfection;
Where the clear stream of reason
has not lost its way into the
dreary desert sand of dead habit;
Where the mind is led forward
by thee into ever-widening
thought and action—
into that heaven of freedom,
my Father,
let my country awake.

Rabindranath Tagore

Santiniketan

checked, rather it flourished during the World War I, and created inconvenient situation for the British rulers.

Revolutionary activity had manifested itself in three different forms. Firstly, mass agitation had become an effective instrument. Political education and propaganda had transcended the limits of the 'educated community' and had embraced the masses. Peaceful agitation, non-violent resistance to authority, and education of the people by suffering were the characteristic features of the movement. Secondly, violent, secret terrorist activity enthused many young men and a number of conspiracies were hatched in different parts of the country, which were perhaps interrelated in their organisation and inspired from the same source. Its ramifications were to be found even outside India. Thirdly, during the World War I, Indian patriots, in exile were seeking the aid of the anti-British diplomatic forces to wage war against British imperialism in India. Thus, till 1919, while moderate Congress was concentrating its efforts on, and directing its energies to, the expansion of representative institutions by playing upon the sense of British justice and formulating schemes of partial responsible self-government, the revolutionary element had made an all-out effort to throw off the detested alien yoke. Success could not crown its efforts, but it left behind its impress on the national movement and prepared the people for the struggle which awaited them.

National movement had been flowing in two different streams wide apart. The Congress had grown eminently moderate in its tone and programme and was content even with the meagre doles of constitutional reforms which though marked by an expansion of the Legislative Councils, retained complete concentration of power in the hands of an alien executive responsible to a distant democracy. Its vision was directed to administrative reforms secured by the goodwill of the bureaucracy. It had closed its doors against all nationalists who could not subscribe to the ideal of colonial representative government following progressively on the political capability of the Indians. The extremists, on the other hand, looked derisively on moderate leadership and were prepared to forge their way independently. Their technique of mass agitation or violent terrorist activity had created a psychology of revolt, but repression by the Government and the unpreparedness of the people owing to lack of political education made them ineffective for a general mass movement which could alone lend strength and solidarity to national movement for freedom. Mahatma Gandhi joined the two streams in 1920 after which confluence the current of national effort for freedom has grown both in content and velocity. The transformation of the Congress into an instrument of national will was smoothened by a change over from constitutional methods to direct action during the transitional years, 1915 to 1920. War and its aftermath with the attendant suffering and economic discontent together with the reluctant halting pace of political progress by the British Government contributed to the rapid development of the new nationalism which was no longer content with prayerfulness and mendicancy but was ready to stand on its legs in the onward march for freedom. The Home Rule movements of Tilak and Mrs. Besant, the re-entry of the extremists into the Congress in 1916, the alignment of the Congress and the Muslim League leading to the formulating of the Congress-League scheme for political reconstruction, mass agitation resulting from the detention of Mrs. Besant and her companions, Montagu's declaration of the goal of gradual realisation of responsible self-government, and Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagraha in Champaran and Kaira in the interest of the pesants and his satyagraha and fast in Ahmedabad in the cause of the labourers—all these were the pointers of a new age. The principle of national self-determination as laid down by President Wilson and the goal of responsible self-government as a positive political objective enunciated by the British Government had electrified the people. Mahatma Gandhi's sacrifice for the peasants and labourers helped to indentify the national movement with the hopes and aspirations of the common man. The transition was fast materialising, when the tragedy of Amritsar and the accompanying cruel and

oppressive behaviour of Imperialism in the form of martial law in the Punjab, and the overthrow of the Caliphate in opposition to the united voice of Indian Muslims accelerated the process and Mahatma Gandhi precipitated the emancipation of the Congress from moderatism by adopting his weapon of non-violent non-co-operation as an instrument of political work. He had the blessings of Tilak and in 1920 had adopted 'the policy of progressive non-violent non-co-operation' to redress the wrongs and establish Swaraj. 'Non-coperation was conceived as a measure of discipline and self-sacrifice'. 'Swadeshi, Hindu-Muslim Unity, and acceptance of Hindustani as lingua franca' along with the stimulation of hand-spinning and hand-weaving or Khaddar and removal of untouchability became the main planks of his principles. The Congress imbibed the revolutionary creed, and revolution became non-violent. Direct action came to be identified with moral elevation. Politics was ennobled by directing it to the service of the people; and masses became the architects of national destiny. The stream of national movement now flowed in these channels and soon it swelled into a mighty torrent which shook the foundations of imperialism and made the realisation of self-government or Swaraj a practical proposition.

A new age had dawned with emphasis on non-violent revolution by the fully conscious self-acting masses. Swaraj or complete independence was its objective and the technique of operation was non-co-operation developing into civil disobedience. In the beginning the goal was left undefined and seemingly vague. Swaraj could bear an interpretation of being merely the attainment of responsible self-government commonly called the Dominion Status, without any necessity of getting out of the British Commonwealth of Nations. It could also, if necessary, yield to the interpretation of complete independence, which was declared as the creed and objective in 1929. Swaraj to Mahatma Gandhi means 'disciplined rule from within', and when a whole nation develops this discipline no earthly power can keep that nation in bondage. But his Swaraj was not merely idealistic or visionary. To him it involved a state in which franchise depended on manual work, military expenditure was low and proportionate to the needs of protecting life and property, justice was cheap, services were open to merit, provinces were distributed on linguistic basis, provincial language was the official language, and no room was available for arbitrary powers. In Swaraj could not flourish the evils of inequality, repression of freedom of speech, thought or action, and poverty. Such a Swaraj did not exclude the possibility of continuing within the Empire. 'I would', he said, 'strive for Swaraj within the Empire, but would not hesitate to sever all connections, if severance became a necessity through Britain's own fault. I thus throw the burden of separation on the British people'. When, therefore, the British Government hesitated to declare unequivocally that the purpose of the Round Table Conference was the attainment of Dominion Status, the Congress pledged itself to Purna Swaraj or complete independence. Analysing the reasons for this decision, the Congress resolution in 1930 stated, 'We believe that it is the inalienable right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom and to enjoy the fruits of their toil and have necessities of life, so that they may have full opportunities of growth; we believe also that if any Government deprives a people of these rights and oppresses them, the people have a further right to alter it or abolish it. The British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom, but has based itself on the exploitation of the masses, and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually. We believe, therefore, that India must sever the British connection and attain Purna Swaraj or complete independence We hold it to be a crime against man and God to submit any longer to a rule that has caused this four-fold disaster to our country'. Mahatma Gandhi had asked for a change of heart, but finding no inclination for such a gesture he lent his weight to the declaration of Independence. Severance of British connection thus became a moral necessity. But this independence has nothing exclusive about it. It envisages friendly relations on the basis of equality with Great Britain and more so with other nations of the world. There is no

room in it for aggressive nationalism which was the governing motive of contemporary European nationalism.

For the attainment of Swaraj, non-co-operation was the chosen instrument. British Imperialism is an element of evil. Hence dissociation from it is a moral duty. Non-co-operation is dissociation in excelsis. It was no mere negative action. Non-co-operation was a positive force in so far as it has developed the strength of resisting evil and building a state in which inequality, poverty and unfreedom have no place. Non-co-operation was adopted to show 'the way out of the unnatural state in which both (India and England) are living'. The next logical step was civil disobedience which was inherent in non-co-operation. The primary condition of non-co-operation or civil disobedience is non-violence and Mahatma Gandhi has made a creed of it. To him 'violent non-co-operation only multiplies evil and that as evil can only be sustained by violence, withdrawal of support of evil requires complete abstention from violence. Non-violence is no expedient adopted in view of the impracticability of violence. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru may have accepted it in 1929 on practical grounds for 'violence too often brings reaction and demoralisation in its train and it may lead to disruption... Organised violence rules the world to-day and it may be that we could profit by its use. But we have not the material or the training for organised violence and individual or sporadic violence is a confession of despair. The great majority of us, I take it, judge the issue not on moral but on practical grounds, and if we reject the ways of violence, it is because it promises no substantial results.' But Mahatma Gandhi adopted it because of its high moral value. Violence could not 'bring the desired relief to the dumb millions', and he was convinced 'that nothing but unadulterated non-violence can check the organised violence of the British Government.....non-violence can be an intensely active force. It is my purpose to set in motion that force, as well against the organised violent force of the British rule as the unorganised violent force of the growing party of violence'. Non-violence he used to 'convert the British people.....and thus make them see the wrong they have done to India'.

Non-violent non-co-operation in 1920-22, as civil disobedience in 1930-32, galvanised the masses of India and became a mighty revolutionary force which brought forth an upsurge of the masses and marshalled new elements, even women of India, to fight the battle of freedom. Wilful suffering in defiance of the laws and orders of authority, mass incarcerations smilingly endured and the blood of martyrs shed in the country's cause, were the concrete expressions of the people's zeal to sacrifice their all for liberty or Swaraj. The non-co-operation movement was an experiment in training the people for civil disobedience, but when the enthusiasm for mass action was in white heat, the exhibition of mass violence in a village, Chauri Chaura, in the United Provinces against 22 policemen compelled the Mahatma to put off the contemplated civil disobedience, and call off the non-co-operation. Non-violence is the sheet-anchor of his movement and because the principle of non-violence was given a rude shock by the ugly action of a few hundred village people, the whole movement was withdrawn. Civil disobedience, however, became a reality in 1930 when subsequent to the visit of the Simon Commission, the British Government while summoning a Round Table Conference did not expose its cards and expressed unwillingness to affirm the objective of Dominion Status. The civil disobedience was a mightier demonstration of the mass application of the principle of non-violence, wilful sacrifice and suffering to paralyse a government which was not based on general will. On both the occasions revolution, not in terms of a coup of a party or faction, or terrorist activity or violent revolt of the army and people, but as a positive effort of the whole people, unfolded itself. It was a new experiment, but it became crystallised as the chief instrument of Indian nationalism in its struggle for freedom from alien domination.

The intense revolutionary fervour and mass action were followed on both the occasions by a reversal to constitutionalism. The Government

of India Act 1919 had enlarged the scope of representative government at the centre and had introduced partial responsible government in the provinces. Devolution of power from the Parliament to the people had commenced and its first phase found expression in the reformed constitution. The Congress demonstrated its resentment at the meagre reforms by launching non-co-operation. The new constitution was, however worked by the Liberals. But when Mahatma Gandhi called off the non-co-operation movement and was himself in the gaol, a section in the Congress led by Motilal Nehru and C. R. Das decided to exploit the new constitutional machinery for forcing the pace of progress towards Swaraj. The Swarajist Party, as the group was called, had the acquiescence of Mahatma Gandhi. The revolutionary Congress had adopted a dual programme, of constructive work, spinning wheel, Hindu-Muslim unity and removal of untouchability, on the one hand and parliamentary work in the legislatures on the other. Both the activities were intended to train the people in discipline for a fresh outlook of revolution. Parliamentary activity bore fruit in the appointment of the Statutory (Simon) Commission by the British Government and the convening of the Round Table Conference to focus Indian political opinion on the form of the new constitution on one side, and the framing of a constitution for free India as a member of the British Commonwealth of nations by a committee (Nehru Committee) of the Congress on the other. Constitutionalism has, however, a limit, and that limit was reached when the tardy equivocation by the British Government shattered the hopes of the political India. But even while civil disobedience was on the anvil, the new constitution, the Government of India Act of 1935, providing for an Indian Federation composed of the whole of India including the Indian States, and limited autonomy for the provinces, was being forged in England with the help of some unrepresentative Indians. When the embers of the civil disobedience began to cool down, the Congress decided to take to legislatures again, and after the introduction of the new Act in 1937, to run the autonomous provincial administrations. It was a new experiment, but before the Congress ministers in the provinces could be well in their saddle, or the federal part of the Act could be applied, the World War II started and on the issue of the entry of India into the War without the consent of the Central Legislature, the constitutional experiment was cancelled, the provincial ministries withdrew, autonomy was scrapped, and individual civil disobedience was resorted to. The Congress was prepared to give effective co-operation in the war effort of England if the British Government could accept the right of India to self-determination after the war. But English conservatism tried to fence the straight issue by taking shelter behind the ostensible communal divisions in India, and compelled national forces to take stock of the situation and determine their course of action.

By the middle of the year 1942, India was faced with the danger of Japanese invasion from the east, and the yawning disintegration of her economic life. War was going against the Allies, and rising prices and failing supplies were bringing people to the verge of misery and starvation. Discontent grew and in many quarters anti-British feeling took even a pro-Japanese turn. The Congress, however, had sympathy with the United Nations as it was believed that 'progressive forces of the world are aligned with the group represented by Russia, China, America and England'. Indian nationalism had always identified itself with the cause of freedom and its sympathies lay with the 'people who are the subjects of aggression'. To combat, therefore, the growing pro-Axis tendency in the country and to enliven war-effort towards victory of the United Nations by rallying progressive elements, the Congress called for an unequivocal declaration of its war aims by the British government 'in regard to democracy and imperialism and the New Order that is envisaged: in particular, how these aims are going to apply to India and be given effect to in the present. Do they include the elimination of imperialism and the treatment of India as a free nation whose policy will be guided in accordance with the wishes of her people? The Working Committee of the Congress also claimed 'the right of self-determination by framing their own constitution

through a Constituent Assembly without external interference'. The national demand was for the immediate establishment of a National Government responsible to the representatives of the people and for a Constituent Assembly after the War to frame the constitution of a free India. It was a demand for the declaration of India's independence as the goal of British policy after the War with the immediate establishment of National Government as an earnest expression of British good-will. Constituent Assembly and National Government thus became the two concrete expressions of national will.

British response was tardy and gave full evidence of imperialist intransigence. Not only was there no effective action taken towards a National Government but also imperialism did not hesitate to malign and defame the Congress as defeatist and pro-fascist. Even when in March 1942 Sir Stafford Cripps was sent by the British Cabinet to India with proposals for 'a just and final solutions', the formula was so rigid that it could not yield to any modification in accordance with the suggestions made by political parties. It had the character of 'take it or leave it'. And by the time that co-operation of the political parties could materialise for the scheme, this gesture of conciliation was withdrawn by the British Government. The proposals were disappointing in so far as they related to the present, and vague in their promise for the future. Mahatma Gandhi characterised it as a 'post-dated cheque on a failing bank' and people were not much interested in it. The Cripps Mission had, however, aroused high expectations and its failure caused genuine disappointment in moderate circles and activised embitterment and desperation in extremist circles. Imminence of Japanese aggression in the east and the unsympathetic attitude of the authorities together with increasing misery of the people made bitterness more acute. Not only was a spirit of violence spreading over the country, but also a movement for the liberation of India with the aid of the Japanese forces was being directed from outside the country under the leadership of Subhas Chandra Bose. Revolutionary constitutionalism had sought a way out in its twin programme of National Government and Constituent Assembly. Peaceful transition of power from British democracy to Indian democracy was contemplated in the Congress proposals for unequivocal declaration of Indian independence and British War aims. But British reluctance to part with power and shed off its imperialistic colour wrecked constitutionalism and made the task of moderation difficult.

Mahatma Gandhi once again became the great moderating influence who sought to divert anti-British bitterness into non-violent channels. To him the idea of Indian freedom gained through the help of foreign bayonets was preposterous. He wrote explicitly, 'I have never attached the slightest importance or weight to the friendly professions of the Axis Powers. If they come to India they will come not as deliverers but as sharers in the spoil'. The Congress was also at the same time desirous of building up 'resistance to any aggression or invasion of India by the Japanese or any foreign Power'. It had no intention 'to jeopardise the defensive capacity of the allied powers' and was prepared to permit the stationing of allied troops in India. While, therefore, the Congress demanded withdrawal of British rule from India, it was not intended 'to mean the physical withdrawal of all Britishers from India.' It appealed for the real 'glow of freedom' so that India might become 'a willing partner in a joint enterprise for securing freedom for the nations and peoples of the world'. But if this appeal failed, a threat of ultimate recourse to non-violent struggle was held out. The attitude of the Government was wholly unsympathetic and verging on repression. Mahatma Gandhi then formulated his 'Quit India' resolution asking people for open rebellion, but non-violent, against an intransigent, oppressive, Government which was incapable of saving India from external aggression. His non-violent civil disobedience movement was intended to prepare the people to resist foreign invasion and to wean away the people from that wave of violence which was sweeping the country. He did not declare civil disobedience immediately but promised to wield that weapon after giving due notice to the

Viceroy, and only in case of the failure of his persuasiveness and humble appeal. But the British Government resorted to immediate repression and incarceration of all the leaders including Mahatma Gandhi with the result that the country was again rocked by a spontaneous revolution which could not always and everywhere maintain its purely non-violent character. 1942 and 1943 saw a reversion to revolutionaryism which took a triple from—non-violent mass civil disobedience, mass-rising and occasional terrorist activities, and military effort aided by foreign forces to overthrow British power. Leaderless civil disobedience and unorganised mass-rising, violent or non-violent, created a psychology of revolt and resistance, and though Government repression succeeded in driving the movement underground, it failed to suppress it. Repression and economic disintegration aggravated bitterness and reinvigorated the demand for independence, which along with the war position of the Allies made the cry for National Government more acute.

The Government resorted to a campaign of mad repression and deliberate misrepresentation of the Congress, which resulted in wide bitterness and frustration of the people. Bureaucracy was jubilant in its triumph. But its inefficiency and callousness were manifested in the grimmest famine in Bengal in modern times which caused 1,500,000 deaths by starvation. The famine marked the colossal failure of bureaucratic administration to cope with the situation created by War. Scarcity of food and its maldistribution in the country, rising inflation, and utter lack of the necessities of life resulting from an unbalanced war economy convinced the people of the unworthiness of a foreign bureaucracy to resolve the crisis. That a National Government alone could extricate the country from the morass was the growing belief. But the continued incarceration of the leaders and absence of any positive effort by legitimate and peaceful means to achieve constitutional advance, aggravated the sense of despondency and frustration and encouraged the growth of a spirit of defiance and revolt. Mahatma Gandhi tried to combat this new wage of violence when in his prison he decided on a fast of 21 days as a protest against the Government's 'leonine violence' and its refusal to let the Mahatma meet the Congress Working Committee and resolve the deadlock. The news of his fast and the anxiety for the life of 'the 74-year old father of the country' led to an intense agitation for his release. The Government, however, could not have the grace to satisfy the public opinion. When later he was released on account of his illness, he very strongly repudiated Congress participation in the campaign of sabotage and mass uprisings of 1942, and unequivocally declared that the much talked-of civil disobedience had never been started by him. He also expressed his view that a revival of civil disobedience in the changed circumstances of 1944 was inconceivable. He opened correspondence with the Viceroy for the resumption of negotiations with the Congress to facilitate early establishment of a National Government which would lend effective support to the United Nations in their war effort. He did not hesitate to meet Mr. Jinnah, the President of the Muslim League, to bring about an amicable solution of the communal deadlock which stood as a rock in the path of Indian Swaraj. His insistence on non-violence, his emphasis on settlement by negotiation, and his faith in the good intentions of Lord Wavell when the latter called a Conference in Simla in the summer of 1945, were well-calculated measures to stem the tide of violence and restore confidence among the people.

But the Government did not seem to be in a mood of conciliation while its acts fanned bitterness and kindled the spirit of violence. Economic disintegration and growing scarcity of human needs led to suffering and occasional bread-riots. The treatment accorded to the members of the Indian National Army and the Delhi trial of its officers created a strong wave of indignation throughout the country. At the close of 1945 mass risings accompanied by governmental repression and popular defiance took place in Calcutta and other places. At the beginning of 1946 demonstrations in Calcutta, and the sympathetic civilian strike in Bombay on the occasion of the mutiny of naval-ratings, gave clear evidence of the temper of the country. Similar strikes were

staged by the police in Delhi or the Indian Signal Corps in Jubbulpore and evoked sympathy and co-operation of the people. These incidents were premonitary symptoms of the violent mood of some sections of the country and indicated that a new leadership which would not shirk from revolutionary violence was coming to the surface. The Communists were also at the same time attempting to exploit the economic sufferings of the people to stage labour strikes and were even organising mass revolts of the peasants. The Forward Bloc was prepared to carry further the programme of Subhas Chandra Bose; and the Congress Socialists unhesistatingly declared their lack of faith in non-violence, and made clarion call for revolution for the same of revolution.

This revolutionary, violent atmosphere prevailed in the country, when, as a result of the Cabinet Delegation's visit to India in the summer of 1946, the Congress leadership attempted to divert the public mind again into channels of constitutionalism. An interim National Government composed of the main elements of the country, and Constituent Assembly consisting of the representatives of the people on the basis of population drawn from every important community and the Indian States were the main items of the new programme which the Congress accepted as the means of attaining its object of independence and self-determination by peaceful means. Indian nationalism again pledged its faith to non-violence in spite of the protests of the left wing and gave an earnest proof of its determination to achieve freedom by legitimate and peaceful methods. But it was felt that if British imperialism continued to thwart Indian aspirations and spurn the stretched hand of friendship, by allying itself with the unprogressive elements in the country, it would not only stifle constitutionalism but would also contribute to release forces of revolution and violent struggle which would sweep off the existing socio-economic structure of the community, snap British connection with India, and give a new trend to Indian nationalism and its world alignments. Freedom's battle once begun will not end till victory has been achieved. Only a peaceful non-violent revolution would be transformed into a violent upsurge of the masses, the limit of whose patience and forbearance had been reached.

World forces and particularly new forces in Asia have in the past as well as in the psesent lent support and strength to the Indian national movement. Indian nationalism has derived inspiration in the past from the rising tide of Japanese nationalism which overthrew Russian imperialism in 1905. It has viewed with sympathy the struggle of Chinese nationalism against the extra-territoriality and economic domination of European imperialisms. And when Japanese imperialism sought to stifle Chinese national freedom, not only a wave of indignation swept this country but also open expressions of sympathy and support were were made from every platform. Similarly, India had hailed the rise of Kamal Ataturk in Turkey or Raza Shah in Iran when they overthrew reactionaryism and foreign domination and directed national effort into progressive channels. India has taken keen interest in the fight for freedom of Egyptian nationalism, and has honoured Zaghlul Pasha as a great leader of human liberty. Indian nationalism took up the cause of Khilafat after the first World War and thereby demonstrated its solidarity with the Muslim world. Indian support for Amanullah of Afghanistan, and her sympathy for the Arabs of Palestine or Iraq in their struggle for freedom from British Imperialism are well known. In recent years, Indian nationalism has made common cause with Indonesian and Viet-Namese movements for freedom. Indian leaders have been fully conscious of the unity of imperialism, of whatever brand, and its determination to stamp out every trace of nationalism in the subject peoples. United action of the dependent peoples becomes, therefore, an inevitable reaction if freedom has to be won. Thus the cause of nationalism, whether in Egypt and Palestine or Indonesia and China, comes to be identical with the interests of Indian nationalism, and a united, concerted action of Asian peoples becomes a necessity if the Asian world is to be freed from the cramping grip of European imperialism.

Affinity of interest, sympathy of purpose, call for Asian solidarity which has long been an essential principle of Indian nationalism. Indian nationalism has also resented racial inequality and snobbishness of European colonists in their colonies. It has therefore stood for national self-respect and equality of the Asian peoples with the Europeans. From its very infancy the Indian National Congress has been called upon to fight the inhuman treatment of the indentured Indian labour in South Africa. Passive resistence by the Indian emigrants, and countrywide agitation in India have been the main weapons to fight this scourge of racial inequality. And India has not hesiteted to bring the matter before the United Nations Organisation and thereby has succeeded in retrieving the principle of racial equality and upholding self-respect of the Asian peoples.

Internally also, Indian nationalism has been a force for national unity social equality. The Indian National Congress has within its fold Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians, Buddhists and the so-called untouchables. Safeguard of rights of minorities, conciliation among all religious groups, and equality of treatment of all without discrimination against the anyone, have been the basic principles of Indian nationalism. From the beginning, the Congress has made no discrimination against the Muslims and when a separatist movement with the formation of the Muslim League in 1906 sought to alienate the Muslims from the battle for freedom, the Congress made the desired gesture in 1916 by agreeing to the effective representation of the Muslims in the Legislatures by conceding even a weightage to them. The close alignment of the Hindus and the Muslims on the Khilafat issue was an example of their common interests and national solidarity. Later, when reactionaryism and Imperialism magnified communal differences, the Congress by its Karachi Resolution (1931) assured the minorities of their legitimate place in the body politic and framed fundamental rights which guranteed absolute freedom of religion, 'freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess and practise his religion subject to public order and morality,' protection for culture, language and script, equality of employment and equality before law for all citizens irrespective of race, religion, creed or sex. In recent years when the Muslim League has put forth its demand for a separate Muslim State by the partition of India, on the basis of the claim for a distinct nationality for Muslims, the Congress has advocated Indian unity while conceding provincial autonomy, limited central union and a cabinet with collective ministerial responsibility, the significance of which, in the words of Brailsford, would be 'that the Cabinet could have done nothing to which the Muslim minority took serious objection. The Congress has always assured the Sikhs of their legitimate place in future free state. Similarly, the interests of the Untouchables have always been dear to the Congress. Mahatma Gandhi did not shrink from staking his life for the cause of the Untouchable, and has included the removal of untochability, as Hindu-Muslim Unity, as an essential object of his constructive programme. While thus the Congress has made communal unity and social equality the essential bases of its being, violent revolutionary elements have made no distinction between man and man on the ground of caste or creed, an example of which was the Indian National Army.

The economic content of Indian nationalism has been socialistic. Protection of the interest of the peasants and safeguard of the rights of labour have been the declared policy of the Congress. It has stood for an economic democracy with its emphasis on the removal of proverty, unemployment and exploitation. Industrial workers, agrarian labourers and peasants, all have shared the fostering care of Indian nationalism. Mahatma Gandhi's constructive programme embraces the protection and encouragement of indigenous cottage industries, agrarian employment and relief of agricultural indebtedness. Abolition of feudal landlordism and nationalisation of key industries and services etc. have formed part of the national programme. Thus, Indian nationalism has within itself as its content the institution of a social democracy—sans poverty and sans inequality. 'The ideal of the Congress is the establishment of a free and democratic state in India. Such a full democratic state involves a

society in which equal opportunities are provided for self-expression and self-fulfilment and an adequate minimum of a civilised standard of life is assured to each member'. Thus did Nehru enunciate the objective of Indian nationalism.

The Indian National movement for freedom has been a great revolutionary movement with its triple objects of liberty, equality and democracy. Its approach is popular and its technique of operation non-violence. It is, in the words of Francis Gunther, 'the first entirely above-ground revolution in history that has undeviatingly followed a policy of using wholly honourable means to achieve its ends, a revolution without hate, without terror, without a spy system, without treachery, without assassination'. It has demanded Independence from Britain but has subscribed to the four freedoms of the Atlantic Charter, and has steadfastly clung to internationalism as expressed in the League of Nations or the United Nations Organisation. Indian nationalism has nothing aggressive about it, and abhors imperialist exploitation. Solidarity of Asian peoples, unity and brotherhood of the world and peace and democracy have been its creed. War with British imperialism has not been allowed to degenerate below a high standard of morality which is gloriously expressed by the phrase 'non-violence'. Hate and enmity have been eschewed. This technique of a revolution of love is the great contribution of Indian nationalism. It has been an ennobling, self-raising revolution which would not only bring freedom to India but establish a reign of love and human brotherhood in the world generally and in Asia particularly.



AND THIS IS AN ENDLESS WONDER

Once again I wake up when the night has waned,
when the world opens all its petals once more,—
and this is an endless wonder.
Vast islands have sunk in the abyss unnamed,
stars have been beggared of the last flicker of their light,
countless epochs have lost their ladings,
world-conquerors have vanished into the shadow of a name
behind dim legends,
great nations raised their towers of triumph
as a mere offering to the unappeasable hunger of the dust,—
among this dissolving crowd of the discarded
my forehead receives the consecration of light,—
and this is an endless wonder.
I stand for another day with the Himalayas,
with the constellations of stars:
I am here where in the surging sea-waves
the infuriate dance of the Terrible is rhythmed with his
boisterous laughter:
the centuries on which have flashed up and foundered
kingly crowns like bubbles
have left their signature on the bark of this aged tree,
where I am allowed to sit under its ancient shade for
one more day,—
and this is an endless wonder.

Rabindranath Tagore

CHAPTER XIV

GENESIS OF THE BIRTH OF THE CONGRESS

1. ECONOMIC & POLITICAL DISCONTENT.

THE Mutiny was suppressed. The British Empire in India was saved. The system of open pillage of the East India Company was ended. Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India and the new policy was ushered in. Superficially speaking, the mutiny represented a revolt against new western ideas, religious interference and the alienation of the decaying Indian feudal Lords. These were to be discontinued. But as it happened, the new policy was even more reactionary and in the long run proved more harmful than the old. The native princes were now to be used as British tools and propped as a bulwark against forces of resistance and progress. Government was no longer to encourage social reform. The benign rule was thus to carefully preserve decaying aristocracies, superstition and warring dogmas and cults. These later were to provide the pattern for British imperialism with its foundations laid deep in the religious differences, caste and untouchability and the feudal states and the aristocracy.

The policy of economic exploitation, however, became even worse though more subtle. Mass unrest was the inevitable result of the ever growing poverty and helplessness of the peasantry.



The common people, Hindus and Muslims, struggled against the terrible oppression, wherever they could and with whatever weapons they could muster. There was a new English educated class who were used to run the Government machinery. They were great admirers of everything western and lent their support to the Government. But the state of their subjection was soon brought home to them. They were excluded from military career or from any high posts in the Government. But it did not take it long for them to have their eyes open to the conditions of famine on the one hand and the reckless expenditure of the Government on the other and the progressive destruction of Indian industry and prosperity. This disillusionment was helped by the snobbish and rude behaviour of the English towards the natives and the humiliation was keenly felt.

The belief of the educated classes in the English tradition of liberal thought and institutions received shocks from various Government measures. The Freedom of the press, introduced earlier by Metcalfe, was soon done away with. The vernacular Press was gagged in 1878 and the Bengali Amrita Bazar Patrika had to change overnight into an English garb. The Arms Act was passed in 1879. This disillusionment advanced further when the Ilbert Bill to abolish "judicial discrimination, based on racial distinction" had to be virtually dropped on account of fierce opposition by the European community and the Civil Service. The Europeans did not hesitate to threaten the Viceroy, Lord Ripon, with violence if the Bill was passed. Indians learned the lesson at this time which has not been forgotten. In 1853 the first Cotton Mill was established in Bombay. The number of mills rose to 156 by 1880. This was an alarming progress and under pressure of Lancashire, all duties on cotton imports into India were removed in 1882.

2. SOCIAL RENAISSANCE

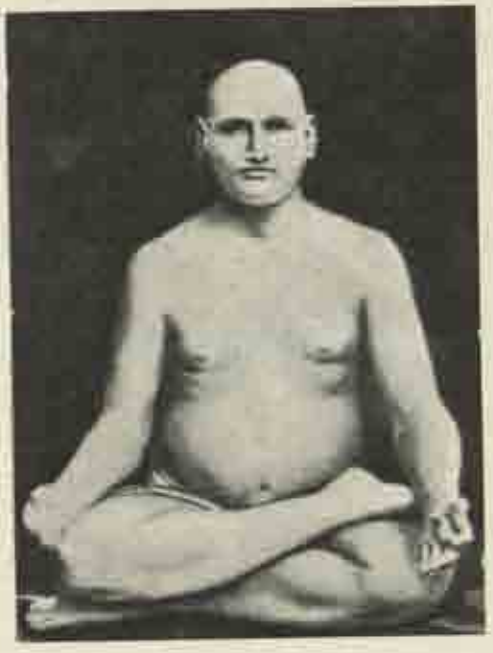
It was not merely the economic exploitation and the sense of political subjection that gave birth to the Congress. The Congress doubtless had its political objective, but it also was the organ and expression of a movement of national renaissance. For fifty years and more before the birth of the Congress, the leaven of national rejuvenation had been at work. In fact national life was in a state of ferment as early as in the times of Rammohan Roy, who may in one sense be regarded as the prophet of Indian Nationalism and the father of modern India. He had a wide vision and a broad outlook. While it is true that the socio-religious condition of his day was the subject of his special attention in his reformist activities, he had nevertheless a keen sense of the grave political wrongs by which his country was afflicted at the time and made a strenuous effort to seek an early redress of those wrongs. Rammohan Roy was born in 1776 and passed away at Bristol in 1833. His name is associated with two great reforms in India, namely, the abolition of Sati and the introduction of Western learning into the country. In the closing period of his life he chose to visit England and his passion for liberty was so great that when he reached the Cape of Good Hope he insisted on his being carried to a French vessel where he saw the flag of liberty flying, so that he might be able to do homage to that flag, and when he saw the flag he shouted, "Glory, Glory, Glory to the Flag." Although he had gone to England primarily as the ambassador of the Moghul Emperor to plead his cause in London, yet he took the opportunity to place some of the pressing Indian grievances before a Committee of the House of Commons. He submitted three papers, on the Revenue system of India, the Judicial system of India, and the Material condition of India. He was honoured by the East India Company with a public dinner. When in 1832 the Charter Act was before Parliament he vowed that if the Bill was not passed he would give up his residence in the British dominion and reside in America.

The Universities were established in 1858 and the High Courts and the Legislative Councils in India between 1861 and 1863. Just before the "mutiny" the "Widow Re-marriage Act" was passed as also the Act relating to conversion into Christianity. In the sixties of the nineteenth century then intimate contact was established with Western learning and literature. Western legal institutions and Parliamentary methods were inaugurated, to mark a new era in the field of law and legislation. The impact of Western civilization on the East could not but leave a deep impress upon the beliefs and sentiments of the Indian people who came directly under its influence.

The only parts of the country which had received some education on modern lines were the provinces of Bengal, Bombay and Madras. The number of educated men even in these provinces was small. In the work of settlement that followed the mutiny, these educated men found ample scope for their ambition. These races of "Babus" began to think like their English masters, admired and emulated everything that came from the West. This "Anglo-phillism" period was specially marked in Bengal.



Raja Rammohan Roy
The Morning Star of Indian national awakening



Swami Dayanand Saraswati



Sir Syed Ahmed



Swami Vivekananda



Ataturk Kemal

His successful fight to save his country thrilled us. But even more inspiring was his vigorous campaign to secularise and modernise Turkey. Kemal's work lays a most valuable pattern for India to-day.



Iqbal

India's great nationalist philosopher and poet, who is often traduced by his own fellow-religionists.

GREAT FOUNDERS OF THE CONGRESS



Sitting (from left to right)—B. Chakravarti; A. Chaudhuri; Krishnaswami Aiyar; The Maharaja of Durbhanga; Dadabhai Naoroji (1886, 1893 and 1906); Rashbehari Ghose (1907 and 1908); Surendranath Banerjea (1895 and 1902).

Standing (from left to right)—Ratan Tata; G. K. Gokhale (1905); D. E. Wacha (1901); R. C. Dutt (1899); Bhupendranath Basu (1914); S. P. Sinha (1915).

(From photo taken at Calcutta Congress 1906)

Soon, however, there was a reaction against this process of denationalisation which assumed various forms, some of a synthesis of the West and the East and others of a revivalism going to the past.

The germs of religious reform planted in the days of Rammohan Roy became broadcast ere long. Keshab Chandra Sen on whose shoulders fell the mantle of Rammohan Roy spread the gospel of the Brahmo Samaj far and wide and gave a new social orientation to its tenets. He turned his attention to the temperance movement and made common cause with the temperance reformers in England. He was largely responsible for the passing of the Civil Marriage Act III of 1872.

The Brahmo Samaj of Bengal had its repercussions all over the country. In Poona, the movement assumed the name of Prarthana Samaj under the leadership of M. G. Ranade, who, it will be remembered was the founder of the Social Reform movement which for long years continued to be an adjunct of the Congress. One feature however to this reformist movement was a certain disregard for the past and a spirit of revolt from the time-honoured and traditional beliefs of the country, which arose from an undue glamour presented by the Western institutions and heightened greatly by the political prestige associated with them. Naturally then, there was bound to be a reaction at any rate a correction, to the denationalising tendencies by the reformist movements.

The Arya Samaj in the North-West founded by the venerable Swami Dayanand Saraswati, and the Theosophical movement from the South furnished the necessary corrective to the spirit of heterodoxy and even heresy which the Western learning brought with it. Both of them were intensely nationalistic movements, only the Arya Samaj movement which owed its birth to the inspiration of the great Dayananda Saraswati was aggressive in its patriotic zeal, and while holding fast to the cult of the infallibility of the Vedas and the superiority of and the infallibility of the Vedic culture was at the same time not inimical to broad social reform. It thus developed a virile manhood in the Nation which was the synthesis of what is best in its heredity, with what is best in its environment. It fought some of the prevailing social evils and religious superstitions in Hinduism as much as the Brahmo Samaj had battled against polytheism, idolatry and polygamy.

The Theosophical movement while it extended its studies and sympathies to the wide world, laid special emphasis on a rediscovery as well as a rehabilitation of all that was great and glorious in the Oriental culture. It was this passion that led Mrs. Besant to start a college in Benares, the holy city of India. The Theosophical activities, while developing a spirit of international brotherhood, helped to check that sense of rationalist superiority of the West and planted anew a cultural centre in India which attracted the savants and scholars of the West once again to this ancient land.

The latest phase of national renaissance in India prior to the Congress was inaugurated in Bengal by that great sage, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, who later found in Swami Vivekananda his chief apostle carrying his gospel to East and West. The Ramkrishna Mission is not merely an organisation wedded to occultism on the one hand or realism on the other, but to a profound transcendentalism which, however, does not ignore the supreme duty of "Loka-Sangraha" or social service.

This "Cyclonic Hindu" as Vivekananda was called in America, carried the message of India not only to America or Europe, Egypt, China and Japan but was himself influenced greatly by the West and preached a dynamic new gospel of regeneration in India, from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas. He stressed on the necessity for liberty and equality and the raising of the masses. He wanted to combine the Western progress with Indian spiritual background. The one constant refrain of his speech and writing was *Abhay*—"Be fearless, be strong, for weakness is sin, weakness is death."

A contemporary of Vivekananda and yet belonging to a much more later generation was Rabindranath Tagore. The Tagore family played a great part in various reform movements during the 19th Century in Bengal. It gave us Abhindranath Tagore and others, great spiritual leaders and artists. The influence of Tagore over the mind of India and the stamp that he has left in the domain of literature, poetry, drama, music, social and educational reconstruction and political thought is unsurpassed in its beauty and depth. It is a marvel of human personality and mind affecting and giving colour to successive generations. The contribution of Tagore has been of a synthesis of the East and West, of the modern and the ancient and of the international with the rising national tide in the country.

These currents and movements were the real lifeblood of the new national consciousness, urge and their embodiment that took shape partly and developed from stage to stage in the form of the Indian National Congress.

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3. THE IDEA OF ALL-INDIA ORGANISATION

The credit for the birth of the Congress is often sought to be given to Alan Octavian Hume, who with the blessings of the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, inaugurated it. The British are thus said to be the foster parents of the Indian nationalism. It is true that Hume was the organiser of the Congress Session in 1885. But it will be seen that the Congress was the natural and inevitable production of various political, economic and social forces.

The more alert among the English administrators were not unaware of the rising unrest in the country. "A reckless bureaucratic Government sat at this time trembling upon the crumbling fragments of a mendacious budget on the one side and the seething and surging discontent of multitudinous population on the other". Mr. Hume collected widespread evidence of the imminence of a "terrible revolution" by the half-starved and desperate population and set about to find ways and means of directing the popular impulse into an innocuous channel.

He wrote a letter to "Graduates of Calcutta University" on March 1, 1883 and the "Indian National Union" was formed in 1884, in response to this, for constitutional agitation, on an all-India basis, and was to meet in Poona later. The Government who first patronised this organisation, however, found later that it outgrew their plans and the patronage was soon withdrawn. It came to be called the 'factory of sedition' in a few years and later Lord Dufferin, himself tried to twit it as a body representing "microscopic minority" of India's population.

There were various provincial political organisations that preceded the Congress. In Bengal which was at the vanguard of progress at this time, in 1843 was founded the British Indian Society to be merged later into the British Indian Association. This body had such stalwarts as Rajendralal Mitra, Ramgopal Ghosh, Peary Chand Mitter and Harish Chandra Mukherjee. In Bombay there was the Bombay Association with Jagganath Sankerset, Dadabhai Naoroji, V. N. Mandlik and Nowrosjee Furdunjee.

Later, more popular bodies, the Indian Association in Bengal and Sarvajanika Sabha in Poona, under Ranade and Mahajana Sabha in Madras were found. Surendranath Banerjee went on an all India tour in 1877 and succeeding years and carried a campaign about Indian Home Rule and the political questions of the day. He attended the Delhi Durbar that year, and the idea of an all-India political organisation was mooted there.

In December 1884, the Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society was held at Madras and there some leading public men met and decided to inaugurate an all-India national movement.

Thus, the ground was well prepared for the Government to take the initiative and the credit of forming the National Congress and keep it under control.

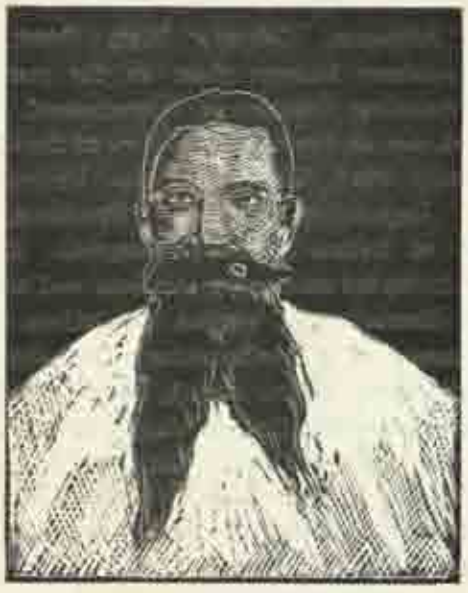
CHAPTER XV

EARLY PHASE OF THE CONGRESS

1. PLAN OF THE BOOK: THREE STAGES OF THE CONGRESS

THE Congress from its birth was something like the liberal party that came into separate existence later. Almost the total contents of the Congress movement at this stage are confined to the yearly sessions. The great leaders who met and conferred and the "Resolutions" that were passed on what were thought to be the most vital problems and most practical demands, in these annual select gatherings, constituted the whole movement, followed by little activity in the succeeding year, excepting 'agitation' on these resolutions in India and in England. A short chronology of these sessions is therefore important. The Allahabad Session, described by the veteran politician, Dr. Sachchidanand Sinha is typical of these earlier sessions.

But an "extremist" element headed by Lokmanya Tilak was coming into evidence and causing uneasiness to the older leaders. The Bengal Partition movement made this element strong and the real nationalist party and character that is the Congress of today was born. This birth is described by Acharya Narendra Dev. There was a split at Surat. The extremist leaders could not capture the Congress but they remained in it. This far-seeing loyalty of the nationalist party as



represented by Lokmanya is the theme of a contribution by Lokmanya's ablest lieutenant, the veteran Maratha leader Kelkar who passed away recently after writing this article at our request. The extremists, thus, though the real "Congress" as it is understood today, remained out of it for many years after Surat. There was a patch-up compromise at Lucknow in 1916. Later in Bombay the moderate leaders left the Congress and set up a new party. But it was not till 1919, after the War and Jalianwalla and the advent of Gandhiji that the Congress was completely transformed, not only into a nationalist but a mass movement. In this book we are giving an account of the Congress before the advent of Gandhiji after the World War I.

FIRST SESSION—Bombay 1885

President :—WOMESH CHANDRA BONNERJI,

General Secretary Allan Octavian Hume.



PRESIDENT

Born in 1844. Started the Bengalee newspaper. Got the Jeejeebhai Scholarship in 1864 and went to England. Was called to the bar, 1867. Advocate, Calcutta High Court, 1868. Soon attained highest place in the profession. Made Standing Counsel of Government. Thrice declined seat on the bench. Fellow of the Calcutta University 1880. Chosen by the University to Bengal Legislative Council. President, First Session of Indian National Congress, Bombay, 1885. Attended successive sessions and took part in the discussion of various resolutions such as appointment of a Parliamentary Committee 1888 and grievances before supply, 1889. Member of the Congress delegation to England, 1890. Left India for good in 1902. Settled in England. Considerable practice at the Privy Council, unequaled services to the British Committee of the Indian National Congress. Died in 1906.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

It had been decided to hold the Congress at Poona

"The first meeting did not, however, take place at Poona, for, only a few days before Christmas, some sporadic cases of cholera occurred possibly same presaging an outbreak and it was thought wiser to move the Conference, now called the Congress, to Bombay. The Managers of the Gokuldas Tejpal Sanskrit College and Boarding House placed the whole of their fine buildings at the disposal of the Congress and all was ready in the morning of the 27th December for the reception of the Representatives of the Indian Nation. As we glance over the lists of those who were present, how many we see who became famous in the annals of India's struggle for freedom. Among those who could not act as Representatives we note the Reformer, Dewan Bahadur R. Raghunatha Rao, Deputy Collector of Madras : The Hon. Mr. Mahadev G. Ranade, then member of the Legislative Council and Small Cause Court Judge of Poona, later to be a judge of the High Court of Bombay, and leader honoured and trusted : Lala Baijnath of Agra was there to be known as scholar and writer later on and Professors K. Sundararaman and R. G. Bhandarkar. Among the Representatives may be noted editors of well-known Indian papers of the Dyan Prakash The Quarterly Journal of the Poona *Sarvajanik Sabha*, The Maratha, The Kesari, The Native Opinion, The Bombay Samachar, The Rast Goftar, The Subodh Patrika, The Bengalee, The Amrita Bazar Patrika, The Hindoo Patriot, The Sahachar, The Reis and Rayyet, The Dnyan Prakash, The Mahratta, The Kesari, The Native Opinion, The Bombay Samachar, The Rast Goftar, The Subodh Patrika, The Bengalee, The Amrita Bazar Patrika, The Hindoo Patriot, The Sahachar, The Reis and Rayyet, The Dnyan Prakash, The Indian Mirror, The Nassim, The Hindusthani, The Tribune, The Indian Union, The Indian Spectator, The Indu Prakash, The Hindu, The Crescent. How many names shine out, familiar honoured ; Mr. A. O. Hume is there from Simla, W. C. Bannerjee and Narendranath Sen from Calcutta, W. S. Apte and G. G. Agarkar from Poona ; Gangaprasad Varma from Lucknow ; Dadabhai Naoroji, K. T. Telang, Pherozeshah M. Mehta—then, as now, leader of the Bombay Corporation—D. E. Wacha, B. M. Malabari, N. G. Chandavarkar, from Bombay ; P. Ranglah Naidu, President of the Mahajana Sabha, S. Subramania Iyer, P. Anandacharlu, G. S. Subramania Aiyar, M. Viraraghavachariar, from Madras ; P. Kesava Pillai from Anantapur. These are among the earliest who fought for Indian's Freedom, and those yet on earth are working for her still.

"At 12 noon on Dec. 28th, 1885, in the Hall of the Gokuldas Tejpal Sanskrit College, the First National Congress met. The first voices heard were of those of Mr. A. O. Hume, the Hon. Mr. S. Subrahmania Aiyar and the Hon. Mr. K. T. Telang, who proposed, seconded and supported the election of the first President, Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee. A solemn and historic moment was that in which the first of the line of men thus honoured by the Motherland took his seat to preside over her first National Assembly.

"After alluding to the representative and weighty character of the Congress he laid down under four heads the objects of the Congress:—

(a) The promotion of personal intimacy and friendship amongst all the more earnest workers in our country's cause in the various parts of the Empire.

(b) The eradication by direct friendly personal intercourse, of all possible creed or provincial prejudices amongst all lovers of our country and the fuller development and consolidation of those sentiments of national unity that had their origin in our beloved Lord Ripon's ever memorable reign.

(c) The authoritative record after this has been carefully elicited by the fullest discussion of the matured opinions of the educated classes in India on some of the more important and pressing of the social questions of the day.

(d) The determination of the lines upon and methods by which during the next twelve months it is desirable for Native politicians to labour in the public interests.

"The nine resolutions of the first National Congress mark the beginning of the formulation of India's demands.

The first resolution was moved by Mr. G. Subramania Iyer. It asked for a Royal Commission to enquire into the working of Indian administration.

The second for the abolition of the India Council.

The third dealt with the defects of the Legislative Councils in which then all members were nominated, and asked for the admission of elected members for the right of interpellation, for the creation of Councils in the N.W.F.P., and Odh, and in the Punjab, and for a Standing Committee in the House of Commons to consider formal protests from majorities in the Councils.

The fourth prayed for simultaneous examination for the I.C.S. and the raising of the age of candidates.

The seventh protested against the annexation of Upper Burma and the proposed incorporation of it with India.

The eighth ordered the sending of resolutions to political bodies and passed all over the country by political bodies and public meetings an admirable plan which has fallen into desuetude they were carried with much enthusiasm and here and there amended on minor points.

The final resolution fixed the next Congress at Calcutta on 28th December, 1886.

(Annie Besant: How India Wrought For Freedom)

SECOND SESSION—Calcutta—1886.

President:—DADABHAI NAOROJI.

Chairman of the Reception Committee:
Dr. Rajendralal Mitra

General Secretary: A. O. Hume. *Delegates*: 406



PRESIDENT

Born 1825. Brilliant academic career. Lecturer in Elphinstone School 1845. Founder of several public institutions. Started Rast Gafter, a Gujerati weekly 1851. Went to England as representative of Cama & Co., 1855. Became their partner later. Founded the East India Association 1867. Professor of Gujerati in the University College, London. Returned to India, 1869. Presented with address and purse of Rs. 30,000. Gave evidence before Fawcett Commission, 1873. Appointed Dewan of Baroda, 1874. Nominated to Bombay Legislative Council 1885. Contested unsuccessfully Holborn seat for Parliament 1886. Lord Salisbury calls him "black man". President, Indian National Congress, Calcutta 1886. Elected to Parliament from Central Finsbury 1892. President, National Congress, Lahore 1892.

Defeated in Parliamentary elections of 1889 and 1905. President, Indian National Congress, Calcutta 1906. Published his great book, Poverty and Un-British Rule in India. Died 1917.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

The number of delegates had gone up to 436, and attended by Surendranath Banerjee and Pandit Madan Mohan Malavya. There was a large number of visitors. Resolutions passed at this session were more comprehensive and better digested than at the first. The poverty of India was stressed and introduction of representative institutions was held to be the only remedy. A Public Services Committee was appointed and asked to report to the Congress. The Committee headed by Dadabhai Naoroji immediately submitted an eight point statement and the Congress approved and adopted it. The system of trial by jury was asked to be extended all over India. The separation of Judicial from Executive functions in the administration of Criminal Justice in the country was stressed. Congress committees were to be organised at all important centres. Lord Dufferin gave a party to the Distinguished visitors.

THIRD SESSION—Madras—1887

President:—BADRUDDIN TYABJI

Chairman of the Reception Committee:
Rajah Sir T. Madhava Row.

General Secretary: A. O. Hume. *Delegates*: 607.



PRESIDENT

Born 1844. Educated in London. Was called to the bar, April 1867. Established lucrative practice. Secretary of the Anjuman-i-Islam 1880 and later its President. President, Bombay Presi-

dency Association. Nominated to the Bombay Legislative Council, 1882. One of the founders of the Indian National Congress and contributed to success of first session, 1885. President Indian National Congress, Madras 1887. Appointed Judge of the Bombay High Court, 1895. Presided over the Mahomedan Educational Conference, Bombay 1903 and pleaded for women education and abolition of purda. Was associated with Aligarh College. Died 11th August 1909.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

The number of delegates rose to 607. A subjects committee was appointed for the first time. For the first time the Congress session was held in a specially erected pandal. A committee was appointed to consider rules to be framed in regard to the constitution and working of the Congress. The session passed the usual resolutions, on expansion of Legislative Councils, separation of executive from judicial functions, military service and Indian Volunteer Corps. Requested that the taxable minimum of Income Tax should be raised to Rs. 1,000 and the deficit in income should be made up by the reimposition of an import duty on finer classes of cotton goods. Requested the Government to elaborate a scheme of technical education. Opined that the Arms Act cast an unmerited slur on the loyalty of the people and requested the Government to modify the provisions of the Act. Governor of Madras attended the reception given by Mr. Eardley Norton and received the delegates at the Government House.

FOURTH SESSION—Allahabad—1888.

President :—GEORGE YULE

Chairman of the Reception Committee :
Pandit Ayodhya Nath

General Secretary : A. O. Hume. *Delegates* : 1,248.



PRESIDENT

He was a prominent merchant of Calcutta. He was elected to preside over the Indian National Congress held at Allahabad in 1888. Sheik Raza Hussein Khan in supporting his election produced a Fatwa from the spiritual leader of the Sunni Community at Lucknow. From that time he took great interest in the Congress movement and when in 1890 at Calcutta, the Government returned the invitation to the Congress session, he fulminated against the "Dogberry clothed in a little brief authority." Yule was of considerable help in strengthening the British Committee of the Indian National Congress and the Sessions of 1890 and 1891 recorded their appreciation of his services. Died in 1892.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

The 4th Indian National Congress was heralded by a tumultous outbreak of opposition. A great pamphlet and lecture campaign prepared obstruction put in getting a site. The Maharajah of Dharbhanga purchased the Lowther Castle and placed it at the disposal of the Reception Committee. The number of delegates rose up to 1248. Opposition to the Congress by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and Raja Shiva Prasad of Benares. Correspondence between Sir Auckland Colvin and Mr. Hume. Lord Dufferin's St. Andrews Dinner speech and Mr. Eardley Norton's powerful reply. The Congress reiterated the resolutions passed at the previous sessions. Urged a Commission of Enquiry into the existing system of Police administration which was declared to be highly unsatisfactory and oppressive. Noted the serious increase in the consumption of intoxicants and requested the Government to discourage

insobriety. Asked for a mixed commission to enquire into the industrial condition of the country. Requested the Provincial Congress Committees to report on the Permanent Land Revenue Settlement.

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THE ALLAHABAD CONGRESS SESSION OF 1888, AND ITS GREAT LEADERS

By Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha.

The most remarkable incident, in my career as an under-graduate, was not so much the training I received, as the visit I paid to Allahabad, in the Christmas week of 1888 to attend, as a visitor, the fourth session of Indian National Congress, held under the presidentship of a distinguished British merchant, and an ex-President of the Bengal Chambers of Commerce, Mr. George Yule. The first session of the Congress, which was held in the Christmas week of 1885, and at which less than hundred persons were present—though they were the most cultured, the most advanced, and the most patriotic Indians—had passed almost unnoticed in Bihar: but its second session, which had been held in Calcutta, in 1886, under the presidentship of Dadabhai Naoroji—rightly described as "the father of Indian Nationalism, and constitutional agitation"—had attracted considerable notice. While no one from Bihar had attended the first session of the Congress, Calcutta being near—and also at that time not only the capital of India, but also of Bihar—several Biharee delegates attended that session, and amongst them there were three from my native town, Arrah, one of whom was my first cousin, and the other two my father's friends. On their return from Calcutta, they gave me vivid and glowing accounts of the proceedings of the Congress, which fired my youthful imagination. They told me how a venerable and distinguished scholar Raja Rajendra Lal Mitra, as the chairman of the Reception Committee, and Dadabhai Naoroji, as the President of that session, had eloquently spoken in their addresses of nationalism and patriotism as the great ideals to be adopted by all educated Indians. I also read detailed accounts of the proceedings of the second session in the Indian Mirror the only Indo-English daily then in Calcutta, which enjoyed a unique position and influence, as it was edited by a great patriot, Narendra Nath Sen, who was a close relation of the great religious and social reformer, Keshub Chandra Sen, whose name was quite familiar to us. The Indian Mirror enjoyed, for a long time, a high reputation for its patriotism and independence, in the Indian press. Later, when its editor had accepted the title of "Rai Bahadur", conferred on him by Government, and had adopted a moderate policy in the expression of its views, it lost ground, and ultimately ceased to exist; but at the time I am writing about it was justly regarded as a great champion of Indian freedom. It published detailed reports of the proceedings of the Congress which were devoured by me, and my fellow-students, with great avidity, interest and enthusiasm. And so I made up my mind that whenever a session of the Congress was held in Upper India, I would make it a point to attend it. Unfortunately for me, the session of the next year (1887) was held at Madras, and it was impossible for me to attend it, owing to the long distance of Madras from Patna, and also because I was involved in my own affairs. But I read carefully the proceedings of the Madras session specially the highly nationalistic presidential address of Mr. Badruddin Tyabji (a great Muslim leader) and became a confirmed Congressman in spirit. I was delighted to see it announced that the next session of the Congress would be held in the Christmas week of 1888, at Allahabad, and made up my mind to attend that session, at all cost.

II

Accordingly, on a cold morning, in the last week of December, 1888, I started very early for Allahabad in a "passenger" train. There were no expresses running on Indian railways, at that time, the only two train services being know as "mail" and "passenger." The former carried only first and second class passengers, mostly British—as few Indians travelled then in the higher classes—and there was no intermediate class on the mail trains at that time. The passenger trains, carrying mostly Indian passengers were terribly slow and the journey to Allahabad was uncomfortable and

tedious. A large number of people were travelling by that train, all bound on the same errand as myself either as delegates or visitors to the Allahabad session of the Congress. I reached Allahabad late in the afternoon, when the sun was about to set, and drove immediately to house of my relations, who were living at that time in the area to the north of Muir Central College, which is now the site of splendid hostels attached to the University of Allahabad. It had been inaugurated in the previous year (1887), as a merely examining body, but since 1922, it had been one of the great unitary (that is teaching and residential) universities in the country, and it celebrated with great eclat its Golden Jubilee, in 1937. The next morning, on which the Congress was to meet, was busy day for me. A huge pandal had been put up by the Reception Committee in the grounds of what was then called the Lowther Castle, but which has been known since as the Darbhanga Castle. Sir Lakshmeshewar Singh, the then proprietor of the Darbhanga estate had, acquired the Lowther Castle, with its extensive grounds, just a year before it was decided to hold the Congress session at Allahabad.

Sir Aukland Colvin, the then Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, and Chief Commissioner of Oudh—what a cumbrous file for one officer to bear, and what a reflection on British habit of tinkering—was bitterly hostile to the Congress movement, and he left no stone unturned to thwart the session being held at the capital of the province. Some months before he had an acrimonious correspondence about the Congress and its object—the establishment of democratic government in India with Mr. Allan O. Hume, the General Secretary of the Congress, which when issued as a pamphlet—called *Audi Alteram Partem*—had a very wide circulation. Mr. Hume had retired from the Indian Civil Service after having occupied a high position in the Government of India and had come off with flying colours in his controversy with Sir Aukland: owing to whose attitude the Reception Committee were unable to secure a suitable site for the holding of the session, and did not know what to do. It was at this stage that the Maharaja of Darbhanga came to the rescue of the Reception Committee, and offered them the use of Lowther Castle building and the grounds. Lala (afterwards Rai Bahadur) Ram Charan Das, a premier citizen of Allahabad, had put up in the Lowther Castle grounds a spacious and beautiful structure, called "pandal", with accommodation to seat comfortably about ten thousand people. Owing to the tremendous enthusiasm evoked amongst the educated public in connection with the Congress, the hostility to its being held by the Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner of provinces, the strong opposition on the one hand of Raja Siva Prasad, C. S. I., of Benares, and of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, K. C. S. I., of Aligarh, on the other, the Congress delegates had trooped in from even distant parts of the country, like Sind and Madras, and their total number somewhere near fifteen hundred.

I had purchased a visitor's ticket for Rs. 10/- but taking advantage of the want of proper supervision and control on the part of the volunteers—such as is the case in large gatherings of Indians even now—I had managed to smuggle myself into the next higher class of those who had paid Rs. 15/- for their ticket. From my seat in the fifteen rupees gallery I could clearly see the dais, and also hear distinctly many, if not all, the speakers. The visitors' galleries, which were put tier upon tier, were choked to suffocation. Though the accommodation provided in them was for about five thousand persons, the huge gathering of visitors crowding them comprised a much larger number. As each leader came inside the pandal, and walked up to the dais to take his seat, he was cheered to the echo. Everybody inside the pandal was excited at the truly great and magnificent gathering of almost all the patriotic and intellectual leaders of the country, and all felt that Indian nationalism was at last coming into his own.

The proceedings began punctually at one in the afternoon, when the Chairman of the Reception Committee, Pandit Ajodhya Nath, rose to deliver his address of welcome. He was a venerable figure. Though by no means tall he looked majestic with his long flowing beard streaked

with grey ; and addressed as he was in the headgear and the flowing costume, which obtained in Indian society in Upper India in those days, he impressed the audience as much by the *tout ensemble* as his address. By reason of his high position at the Bar of the Allahabad High Court, and also in public life, he attracted considerable attention. He read his inaugural address with great warmth and vigour, but I could not follow much of it, as his voice did not reach the visitor's galleries, and there were no microphones or loud speakers then in existence. He made however a great impression on me by the animated gestures with which he accompanied the delivery of his address, at the conclusion of which he was loudly cheered. That function over, a number of the eminent leaders, who had seats on the dais, came forward one after another to propose, second, and support election of Mr. George Yule to the presidential chair. Amongst the speakers the two who made the greatest impression on me were Pheroze Shah Mehta and Surendra Nath Banerjee both of whom I heard for the first time, and who held the mammoth audience spell-bound by their eloquence. Amidst tremendous cheering Mr. Yule assumed the office of the President, and delivered his presidential address. He had a fine modulated voice, and read out his address distinctly. It made a remarkable impression on that great gathering, because the speaker was the first member of the British community in India to have indentified himself openly with the then demands of the Congress, while the fact of his having been an ex-President of the Bengal-Chamber of Commerce gave to his words an added dignity and prestige. At the conclusion of his address, which was vociferously applauded, the Congress adjourned to the next day, after constituting a Subjects Committee, which was to meet that evening.

III

The Subjects Committee of the Congress was the first important business meeting of educated Indians which I had occasion to witness. It began its work after tea, at about 6 p.m. and continued till half past nine, when it broke up for dinner. It assembled again at half past ten and worked continuously till half past two in the morning. I attended it right through, having been smuggled in by a friendly volunteer. I watched its work not only very carefully, but with a keen interest, following closely the speeches made, and more than that the procedure adopted for conducting its business ; and I recall, even at this long distance of time, of now nearly sixty years, that I was grievously disappointed at the method adopted by the Subjects Committee in the disposal of its work. To begin with, no one who took part in the debates, or for the matter of that no member of Committee, had a scrap of any text or draft written out from before, about the matters to be discussed and agreed upon for the next day's work, at the open session of the Congress. There were only speeches, and more speeches, but seldom was an effort made to focus the main point, or points, of discussion, to be able to arrive at an agreed decision, and to record that decision then and there, with a view to get it adopted by the Committee, and then to pass on to some other subject for consideration. On the contrary, each subject was sought to be thrashed out at inordinate length, without any attempt at coming to any definite decision, by focusing the issue on the points involved for consideration. Scarcely any one seemed to be concerned with time limit, and at the end of insufferably long and more or less irrelevant speeches, Mr. Allan O. Hume, the General Secretary of the Congress, was requested to draw up a resolution embodying the sense of the house, as the Secretary understood it, or could gather it from the general trend of the discussion. Absolutely inexperienced as I was at that time in public affairs, it did seem to me a very wrong method of conducting business, and I felt that the proper course was for the mover of each resolution to place a written text, or draft, before the Committee, which should have also considered all the texts of amendments sent to the Chairman, and then attempted to come to an agreed decision quickly, and recorded it then and there, instead of leaving the drafting of the resolutions to the General Secretary.

Since I attended the meeting of the Subjects Committee of the Congress, in December, 1888, tremendous changes had taken place in various

respects, in the educational, economic, political, and social life of the country, and the provincial angularities and diversities that then obtained amongst educated Indians in many matters—say, in the style of dressing hair, wearing clothes, and in other respects—had been, to a very large extent, obliterated by the levelling effect of English education and western cultural influences. A gathering of educated Indians today presents a much greater uniformity in costume, and several other subsidiary matters, than was the case in 1888, when even the small number of parsis wore head-gear in three or four different styles to say nothing of the various kinds of turbans, *pugries*, *dustars*, hats, caps, topies and, last but not the least, the European top-hat-inverted-hat of the Sindhis, which had practically disappeared long since. On the one hand there were present on the platform the few Europeanised Indians (like Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee, the President of the first session of Congress held at Bombay, in 1885, and some others) dressed faultlessly in European clothes, and with their style of living completely westernised, while at the other end there were pious Muslims in their flowing robes—*abbas*, *jubbas*, and *kabbas*—and orthodox Hindus (particularly from the south) in various shapes and styles of costumes, some even habited as it seemed to me, in grotesque habiliments. Yet all such discrepancies, and many others, had almost completely disappeared during the last sixty years; and the western influences had conduced to a much greater homogeneity than was then the case. But I regret to have to say it that scarcely any change, worth the name, had taken place in this long interval in the method of conducting public business in this country, specially at gatherings at which there are no persons possessing administrative or official experience.

I have attended, since 1888, a large number of deliberative assemblies of my countrymen, and have had occasion to watch their work at close quarters, and I must state my conviction (in the interest of truth, as I conceive it) that the deficiencies and limitations from which the conduct of business suffered in the early years of the Congress, as I noticed it at the Allahabad session of 1888, still largely prevail at a meeting of the educated Indians, which impedes seriously the smooth conduct of public affairs. The great proneness of Indian public workers, then as now, to incessant talking, and that too on matters mostly beside the point, and the gross indifference, on their part, to put down their views on paper, and to submit the written text as a basis for discussion, is a great hindrance to quick disposal of work. Such habits, on the part of the members of a business meeting, naturally require a strong and, at times, a more or less assertive Chairman. Unfortunately, by far the larger number of Indian Presidents and Chairmen are weak and unassertive, and cannot control discussion within proper limits, with the result that, as a rule, it runs into irrelevance, most of the speakers flying off at a tangent. Usually, any attempt either to curtail irrelevance, or to focus, the point at issue, is regarded as a gross interference with the speaker's indefeasible right to talk out the very existence of the world.

The habit of the educated Indians finds expression not unoften even at the Bar of the highest judicial tribunals—inspite of the fact that the presence of learned Judges on the bench, operates, to a large extent, as a controlling factor in the situation. I remember a friend of mine with whom incessant talking in making his submission to Judges, was the very breath of his nostrils. In presenting an application, with no point in it, to a Judge in the Patna High Court, he spoke breathlessly for full fifty-five minutes before the Judge, feeling compelled to intervene, quietly handed over the petition to the Court Reader, as a gentle intimation that he (the Judge) had heard enough of the case, and was not disposed to listen to the advocate any more. The counsel—on noticing what he no doubt regarded as an atrociously wrong, if not insulting, conduct on the part of the Judge—exclaimed: "Does it mean, my Lord, that your Lordship is not disposed to hear me further, and is going to reject my application"? The learned Judge (who was the son of an Irish peer who was a member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and himself a member of the Irish Bar) warmed up bit and said: "But Mr So-and-So, you have addressed me

already for nearly one hour, without making a point to satisfy me that your application should be admitted. How long do you expect me to hear you further"? The talkative counsel seemed to be cruelly hurt at this remark of the Judge, and he declaimed at the highest pith of his stentorian voice: "One hour, my Lord, one hour, you said: why I have barely opened my lips for a couple of minutes". Roars of laughters, in which the learned Judge himself joined, drowned the subject-matter of the application, which was taken to have been rejected amidst the loud guffaws in which the Judge, the lawyers, and even those spectators (who understood English) all joined. It is true that while eminent leaders amongst the advocates are free from such lapses, the same cannot be said of vast bulk of the rank and file in the profession, many of whom mistake reiteration, irrelevance, and long-widedness, as commendable features of successful advocacy, and the only method in their opinion of impressing their clients, if not judges, that they had done their work efficiently, and honestly. While the standard of advocacy in the highest judicial tribunals (like the Federal Court, the High Courts, and the Chief Courts) had been mostly above approach, there was room for improvement even now in the standard of advocacy in the District Courts, which deal out justify to the vast bulk of the litigants in the country. But so far as our public meetings or Committee discussions are concerned (not excluding our legislatures), things have not advanced beyond the conditions that obtained sixty years ago.

FIFTH SESSION—Bombay 1889.

President:— Sir William Wedderburn

Chairman of the Reception Committee:
Sir Phirozeshah Mehta

General Secretary: A. O. Hume. *Delegates:* 1889.

President

Born 1836. Member of I.C.S. Co-operated with Hume in his efforts to channelise Indian political discontent. President, Indian National Congress, Bombay, 1889. Connected with the British Committee of the Indian National Congress. Attended the 20th session of the Congress. Re-elected President, Indian National Congress, Allahabad, 1910. Tried hard to bring about a rapprochment between the Congress and the Muslims. Toured throughout the country. Successive sessions of the Congress passed resolutions appreciating his meritorious services to the Congress cause. Wrote a number of books and did considerable propaganda for India. Died. 1918.

Details of the Session

This session is known as the Bradlaugh session as Mr. Charles Bradlaugh M.P. attended. Address presented. He delivers a speech in reply. Number of delegates rose to 1889. The number of delegates returnable from each Congress circle was limited to 5 per million of its total population. Demanded simultaneous holding in India and England of all examinations for all Civil branches of the Public Service in India. Referred to the Currency problem. At the conclusion of the Congress, addresses were presented to Mr. Bradlaugh on behalf of all parts of the country. Mr. Bradlaugh in the course of a memorable oration said, "For whom should I work, if not for the people? Born of the people, trusted by the people, I will die of the people and I know no geographical or race limitations". He promised to introduce a Reform Bill in the Parliament,



SIXTH SESSION—Calcutta 1890

President: Sir Pherozeshah Mehta
Chairman of the Reception Committee:
Man Mohan Ghose.
General Secretaries:
A. O. Hume and P. Ayodhya Nath.
Delegates: 677

President

Born 1845. Went to England in 1864 and called to the bar. Entered the Municipal Corporation of Bombay and served it long and brilliantly. Founder-President of the Bombay Presidency Association. Associated with the Congress from its very inception. Member, Bombay Legislative Council, 1886. President Indian National Congress, Calcutta 1890. Elected to the Imperial Legislative Council 1893. Chairman, Reception Committee of the Congress, Bombay 1904. Knighted 1902. Took keen interest in the rights of Indians Overseas. Visited England for Congress propaganda. Vice-Chancellor of the Bombay University. In 1911 started the Central Bank of India. Founded the Bombay Chronicle in 1913. Died 1915.

Details of the Session

The Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal returned the visitor's tickets sent to him as usual by the Reception Committee and wrote that the orders of the Government of India definitely prohibit the presence of Government servants at such meetings. Ratified the previous resolutions of the Congress. Resolved to hold a session of the National Congress in London in 1892. A Congress deputation headed by Surendranath Banerjea and W. C. Bonnerji was to go to England to represent the Congress demands. Funds were sanctioned for the British Committee of the Indian National Congress. Urged the extension of the permanent land revenue settlement to all portions of the country where it had not been introduced till then.



SEVENTH SESSION—Nagpur 1891

President: P. Ananda Charlu
Chairman of the Reception Committee:
C. Narayanaswami Naidu.
General Secretaries:
A. O. Hume and Pandit Ayodhya Nath.
Delegates: 812

President:

Born in 1843. Lawyer 1869. Was a delegate to the first Congress held in Bombay in 1885. Since then, till his death he was an ardent Congressman. The India Council was the main target of his attack at successive Congress sessions. He described it as 'the oligarchy of fossilized Indian administrators who were superannuated for service in India'. President, Indian National Congress, Nagpur 1891. Member of the Imperial Legislative Council 1895-1903. Put up a plucky fight for freedom of speech. "He was a shining light of

the South Indian political firmament for nearly two decades and though he never had a following or a school of thought behind him, he was a notable personality with a rugged eloquence, all his own." Died 1908.

Details of the Session

The Congress declared that the sad condition of the starving millions constitutes the primary *raison d'etre* of the Congress. It was decided that annual session of the Congress should continue to be held in India till "all necessary reforms have been secured." Due to the General Elections in England, the Congress Session proposed to be held in London in 1892 was postponed. The usual resolutions on the Reform of Legislative Councils, increasing poverty of India, Arms Act, Military Education, Simultaneous examinations, Salt tax, income tax and excise policy passed. A sum of Rs. 40,000 was sanctioned for the British Committee of the Indian National Congress.

EIGHTH SESSION—Allahabad 1892.

President:—W. C. Bonnerji
Chairman of the Reception Committee:
Pandit Bishambhar Nath
General Secretaries: A. O. Hume and P. Ananda Charlu
Delegates: 625.



President

"His utterances were as statesmanlike and far-seeing as they were modestly conceived. There was no undue elation but at the same time there was no shrinking from responsibility and none rejoiced more than he at the simple fulfilment of the movement he and his companions had met to inaugurate. Since that eventful day, he had devoted himself to the cause with characteristic thoroughness. As a member of the British Committee of Indian National Congress he displayed the same wisdom and earnestness and his advice and guidance had always been of inestimable weight and value to them in their deliberations. The successful career which had placed him at the head of the profession was the result of his industry and perseverance, qualities which distinguished him no less than his fearlessness and love of country. It would be long before they looked upon his like; and they could console themselves with the thought of the bright example he had left behind him" (Dadabhi Naoroji).

Details of the Session

India Councils Act of 1892 had just been put into operation and the Congress, while loyally accepting it, regretted that the Act did not concede the right of election of representatives to the people. Regretted the resolution of the Government of India on the Report of the Public Service Commission and had a petition submitted to the House of Commons. An earnest appeal was made to Government to investigate the hardship created by the Forest Laws in Peninsular India and the hilly tracts of the Punjab. The usual resolutions on jury system, separation of executive and judicial functions etc, were passed.

NINTH SESSION—Lahore 1893



President : Dadabhai Naoroji

Chairman of the Reception Committee :
Sardar Dayal Singh Majithia.

General Secretary : A. O. Hume. *Delegates* : 625

Details of the Session

The first session in the Punjab which was so far politically backward. Raised unprecedented enthusiasm. President focussed the attention on Indian poverty. Also reiterated "whether I am a Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Parsee or of any other creed, I am above all of India. Our country is India." Pandit Malavya delivered a forceful speech about the growing poverty of the villages. Resolutions on a demand for Legislative Council and High Court for the Punjab, reconstruction of Medical Services, and on monetary and exchange policy were passed and previous resolutions confirmed.

TENTH SESSION—Madras 1894



President : Alfred Webb.

Chairman of the Reception Committee :
P. Rangiah Naidu.

General Secretary : A. O. Hume. *Delegates* : 1163.

President

Irish member of the House of Commons, whose co-operation for the Indian movement was enlisted by Dadabhai Naoroji and W. C. Bonnerji. Was a stalwart fighter of the Irish freedom movement. Was an active member of the British Committee. Died 1908.

Details of the Session

The most important resolutions were to protest against Excise duty, on cotton manufacture in British India in the interests of Lancashire, and the levy of cost of Punitive Police force quartered in disturbed areas. Gagging of the Press in the States under British administration was strongly condemned. Usual resolutions on Indian poverty, India council, public services, recruitment to the judicial services, and medical services and liberalisation of education were passed.

ELEVENTH SESSION—Poona 1895

President : SURENDRANATH BANERJEA
Chairman of the Reception Committee : V. M. Bhide.
General Secretaries : A. O. Hume and D. E. Wacha.
Delegates : 1584



PRESIDENT

Born 1848. Entered the Indian Civil Service 1871. Dismissed after 3 years. Professor of English and later founder of the Ripon College which he managed for many years. Prominent member of Indian Association. First political leader to make extensive all-India tours or propaganda. Went to England in 1880 on Congress deputation. Member of the Bengal Legislative Council 1893-1901. Editor, Bengalee. President Indian National Congress at Poona 1885 and Ahmedabad 1902. Great Orator. Took leading part in opposing the Bengal partition but disapproved of the Boycott movement. Sided with the Moderates in the Congress split at Surat in 1907. Member, Imperial Legislative Council. Left Congress after 1919 and joined Liberal Federation. Supported Montague-Chelmsford Reforms and became minister for local self-government 1919-21. Framed and passed Calcutta Municipal Act in 1923. Defeated by a Swarajist in the elections of 1923. Author of his memoirs "A Nation in Making". Died 1925.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

The Congress entered a solemn protest against the disabilities imposed on Indian settlers in South Africa, and against Legal Practitioners Bill by which Provincial lawyers were sought to be subordinated to District Judges. The usual resolutions were reiterated and previous resolutions confirmed. There had been a severe famine in 1895-96. Lokamanya Tilak was shocked at the indifference of Government and people's helplessness and carried on an agitation to infuse courage into the people. There were signs of a split in the Congress between Tilak's Party and the Liberals.

TWELFTH SESSION—Calcutta 1896.

President :—RAHIMATULLAH M. SAYANI.
Chairman of the Reception Committee :
Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter
General Secretaries : A.O. Hume and D.E. Wacha
Delegates : 784.



PRESIDENT

Born 1846. Fought against heavy odds to obtain higher education and passed M. A., L. L. B. Appointed Justice of the Peace and the Fellow of the Bombay University and later member of the Syndicate. Elected to the Bombay Corporation 1876, and as

its President in 1888. Secretary of Anjuman-i-Islam. Appointed member of the Bombay Legislative Council 1888. President, Provincial Conference, Ahmedabad 1893. President, Indian National Congress, Calcutta 1896. Elected to the Imperial Legislative Council 1896. Took notable part in Budget speeches. Died 1902.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

1896 had been a year of great disasters. Plague appeared for the first time and famine broke out. Resolutions on poverty, famine and their suggested remedies were passed. But the Congress did not forget to congratulate the Queen Empress on her Diamond Jubilee.

THIRTEENTH SESSION—Amraoti 1897.

President—C. SANKARAN NAIR.
Chairman of the Reception Committee:
G. S. Khaparde.
General Secretaries: A.O. Hume and D. E. Wacha
Delegates: 692.



PRESIDENT

Born 1857. Advocate and Journalist. Conducted Madras Review and associated with Madras Law Journal. Secretary, Devastanam Committee. Fellow of Madras University 1889. Nominated to Madras Legislative Council 1890. President, Indian National Congress, Amraoti 1897. Judge of the Madras High Court 1908. Presided over the National Social Conference 1908. Appointed Education Member in Viceroy's Executive Council 1915. Resigned his post as protest against Punjab atrocities. Opposed non-co-operation and wrote "Gandhi and Anarchy". Sir Michael O'Dwyer filed libel suit. Justice McCardie awarded damages, and heavy costs against Nair. President of All Parties Conference 1921. Member of the Council of State since 1920. Co-operated with the Simon Commission. Died 1934.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

There had been great unrest and severe Government prosecution. Public feelings had been greatly exasperated by the offensive behaviour of Mr. Rad, head of the Plague Committee. Mr. Rad and another officer were assassinated on queen's birthday by Mr. Chapekar. Lokamanya Tilak was arrested and later sentenced to 18 months rigorous imprisonment. Sardars Natu Brothers were deported under Regulation 25 of 1827. Punitive Police was quartered in Poona. Law of Sedition and other sections in the Penal Code were even more stringent. Press Committees were established in the Bombay Presidency to control Newspapers.

The Congress duly protested against these onslaughts on popular rights. The President expressed sympathy and sorrow at the arrest of Lokamanya. An attempt to pass a special resolution on Tilak's release, however, failed.

This raised Tilak's fame and popularity in the highest measure.



FOURTEENTH SESSION—Madras 1898

President : ANANDA MOHAN BOSE
Chairman of the Reception Committee :
N. Subba Row Pantulu.
General Secretaries : A. O. Hume and D. E. Wacha
Delegates : 614

PRESIDENT

Born 1846. Brilliant academic career. Professor of Mathematics. Later proceeded to England. President, Cambridge Union. Returned to India 1874 as Barrister. Successful practitioner and owner of Tea Estate in Assam. Fellow of Calcutta University 1877. Nominated Bengal Legislative Council 1886. But elected by his University 1895. Ardent Brahmo. President of New Sadharana Samaj. Went to Germany 1897. Did valuable work in England. President Indian National Congress, Madras 1898. Participated in Bengal Partition agitation from sickbed. Died 1906.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

Congress sent greetings to Lord Curzon on his appointment as Viceroy. Strong protest against newly established Press Committees.



FIFTEENTH SESSION Lucknow 1899

President : ROMESH CHUNDER DUTTA
Chairman of the Reception Committee :
Babu Bansilal Singh.
General Secretaries : A. O. Hume and D. E. Wacha
Delegates : 789

PRESIDENT

Born 1848. Entered Indian Civil Service 1869. Appointed District Officer 1883. Regional Commissioner 1894. Resigned from I. C. S. 1897. Published Peasantry of Bengal, History of Literature of Bengal, Translation of Rigveda, History of Civilisation in Ancient India, and other books. Lived in England 1897-1904. Lecturer in Indian History at the University College, London. President Indian National Congress at Lucknow 1899. Returned to India 1904. Was Dewan of Baroda State. Member of the Royal Commission on Decentralisation 1907. Was a Moderate. First Indian economist to study and write on Indian agrarian problems. His works are classics on the subject. Died 1909.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

The policy of Lord Curzon had begun to come into evidence. Inflicted on the country in quick succession offensive measures one after another. The Congress was still Moderate and Lokamanya Tilak had to withdraw his strong resolution condemning the Government but the extremists were making their presence felt. Lala Lajpat Rai successfully pressed Congress to

devote half-day to the consideration of educational and industrial subjects. The resolutions of the Congress began to take a more militant colour. These protests were made against the new reactionary policy, the Punjab Land Alienation Bill, the Foreign Press Messages Bill and the suppression of Local Self-Government by Calcutta Municipal Act, and against Government circular prohibiting teachers of aided institutions from taking part in politics and attending public meetings. The new Congress constitution was passed. The object of the Indian National Congress was laid down "to promote by constitutional means the interests and the well-being of the people of the Indian Empire."

SIXTEENTH SESSION—Lahore 1900

President :—N. G. CHANDAVARKAR
Chairman of the Reception Committee :
Rai Kali Prasanna Roy Bahadur.
General Secretaries : A. O. Hume and D. E. Wacha.
Delegates : 567



PRESIDENT

Born 1855. Editor Hindu Prakash 1878-1889. Enrolled as lawyer 1881. Practised successfully. Went on Congress deputation to England in 1886. Fellow of Bombay University and Justice of Peace. Ardent Brahmo and mainstay of Prarthana Samaj. President Madras Hindu Social Reform Association anniversary and Provincial Conference Karachi 1896. Elected Bombay Legislative Council by University 1887. Re-elected 1899. President Indian National Congress Lahore 1900. Judge of the Bombay High Court 1901. Chief Justice 1909. Knighted 1910. Dewan of Indore 1914. Vice-Chancellor Bombay University Co-operated with the Montagu Chelmsford Reforms and became first President of Bombay Legislative Council. Keen social reformer and Moderate. Died 1923.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

The Congress constitution was further amended. Resolution on Punjab Land Alienation Act postponed in deference to Muslim delegates' wishes.

SEVENTEENTH SESSION—Calcutta 1901

President :—DINSHAW EDULJEE WACHA
Chairman of the Reception Committee :
Maharaja Bahadur Jogadendra Nath Roy of Natore
General Secretaries : A. O. Hume and D. E. Wacha



PRESIDENT

Born 1844. President Bombay Corporation for 30 years. Member Millowners Association for 45 years. Member Improvement Trust 1898-1919. Associated with the Congress from the

beginning. Joint General Secretary of Congress 1898-1913. President Indian National Congress 1901. Secretary Bombay Presidency Association 1895-1915. President Bombay Presidency Association 1915-1918. Member Bombay Legislative Council 1915-16, and of Imperial Legislative Council 1916-20. Governor of the Imperial Bank of India 1920. Left the Congress after 1919. President Western India Liberal Association 1919-27. President Bombay Provincial Libetal Conference 1922. Member of the Council of State 1920. Died 1936.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

A Committee consisting of Lokamanya, Malavya, and seven others was constituted to go into the economic condition of India. A Resolution urging the Government to improvement in agriculture and for establishing experimental farms was passed. Much enthusiasm was evoked and a strong resolution passed on indentured labour in Assam. The delegates' fee was raised from Rs. 10 to Rs. 20 to meet the deficit of the expenses of British Committee.

EIGHTEENTH SESSION—Ahmedabad 1902

President : SURENDRANATH BANERJEA
Chairman of the Reception Committee :
Dewan Bahadur Ambalal Sakarlal Desai.
General Secretaries :
A. O. Hume and D. E. Wacha. *Delegates* : 471

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

King Edward VII had succeeded this year to Queen Victoria. The usual resolution on poverty and famine and enquiry into the economic conditions were passed. The Congress emphatically protested against a fresh permanent burden of £ 786,000 per annum on account of the British Forces in India. Also again the retrogade and reactionary recommendations of the Universities Commission was condemned.

NINETEENTH SESSION Madras 1903

President : LAL MOHAN GHOSE
Chairman of the Reception Committee :
NAWAB SYED MAHOMED BAHADUR
General Secretaries :
A. O. Hume and D. E. Wacha. *Delegates* : 538



PRESIDENT

Born 1849. Barrister at Calcutta. Went as delegate of Indian Association to England 1879. Participated in Ilbert Bill controversy. A most eloqnent and powerful orator. Twice contested sent in English Parliament as a Liberal but failed. Returned to India in 1884 and resumed practice. Member Indian Legislative Council 1892. President Indian National Congress 1903. Later

retired from politics and took to literature. Died 1909.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

Lord Curzon's reactionary Universities Bill, destroying the independence of the Universities, had been published. Protest against the Bill. Protested against official Secrets Bill as dangerous to individual liberty. Comprehensive resolution on British Military policy in India and the saddling of the cost of the military garrison on Indian Exchequer.



TWENTIETH SESSION Bombay 1904

President SIR HENRY COTTON

Chairman of the Reception Committee:
Sir Pherozeshah Mehta.

General Secretaries: A. O. Hume, D. E. Wacha, G. K. Gokhale. *Delegates*: 1010.

PRESIDENT

Born at Bombay 1845 and educated in England. Entered I.C.S. 1857. Was District Magistrate at Midnapore for 11 years. Held other responsible posts and was Chief Secretary, Home Member to the Government of Bengal. Retired from I.C.S. as Chief Commissioner of Assam. Published his "New India" 1885. His Indian sympathies and difference of opinion with Lord Curzon stood in the way of his becoming a Governor. President Indian National Congress Bombay 1904. Elected to the House of Commons 1905. Died 1915.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

Congress protested against Lord Curzon's Tibetan Expedition and its expenditure being spent out of Indian Revenue. It also protested strongly against the forward policy in Tibet, Afghanisthan, and Persia and his attempt to involve India in foreign entanglements. The military expenditure was growing still further on account of Lord Kitchener's Army Re-organisation scheme at an additional cost of £ 10 millions. The Congress reviewed this with grave alarm. The proposals for partition of Bengal had already been made known and the Congress recorded its protest against them.



TWENTYFIRST SESSION Benares 1905.

President: GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALE

Chairman of the Reception Committee:
Hon. Munsi Madhav Lal

General Secretaries: A. O. Hume, D. E. Wacha and G. K. Gokhale. *Delegates*: 756

PRESIDENT

Born 1866. Joined Deccan Education Society 1884 as Professor of English in Fergusson College. Came under the influence of M. G. Ranade. Secretary Sarvajanik Sabha, Poona. Attended

Congress 1890. Went to England 1896, to give evidence before the Welby Commission. Elected to Bombay Legislative Council 1899, Imperial Legislative Council 1902. President Indian National Congress 1905. Went to Africa and met Gandhiji and took interest in South African Indian question. Endeared himself to all for simplicity of character and intellectual powers and long and selfless service to the country. Founder and was President of Servants of People Society. Leading exponent of Moderate school. Died 1915.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

Bengal partition has been carried against vehement and universal opposition. There has been bitter exasperation roused on account of the policy of Lord Curzon. For the first time since British rule began, all sections of Indian community without distinction of caste or creed have been moved by a common impulse to get together in offering resistance to any wrong. The idea of Swadeshi movement and boycott as a political weapon were introduced for the first time. The Nationalists opposed the resolution of welcome to the Prince of Wales who was to visit India. But had to walk out on their defeat. Another topic of contention was the question of boycott of British goods. Mr. Gokhale was deputed to England to urge the Congress proposals on the British authorities. A standing committee of 15 members was appointed to implement the resolutions of the Congress during the year.

TWENTYSECOND SESSION Calcutta 1906

President:—DADABHAI NAOROJI

Chairman of the Reception Committee:
DR. Rash Behari Ghosh.

General Secretaries: A. O. Hume, D. E. Wacha and G. K. Gokhale. *Delegates*: 1663.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

The year 1905 had been a year of unprecedented popular demonstrations and activity, in Indian history. The Calcutta Session of 1906 is a landmark in the national struggle. For, it was here, though it manifested itself more violently the next year, that a split had come distinctly marked between the Liberal and the Nationalist elements. Dadabhai Naoroji was a veteran and universally revered leader and was brought specially from England to preside over the Congress to avoid open breach.

A huge Pavilion was erected with an accommodation of 20,000 persons. Number of delegates attended were more than 1600. The proceedings opened with prayers and singing of Vande Matatram. Following Resolutions were passed :—

(1) Demanding reversal of partition of Bengal. (2) Upholding the Boycott movement in Bengal. (3) Supporting the Swadeshi movement (4) protesting against the Educational Policy of the Government (5) asking the people to take up national education (6) demanding self-government.

The slogan of Swaraj was mentioned by the President for the first time.



CHAPTER XVI

THE SECOND PHASE OF THE CONGRESS

BIRTH OF THE NATIONALIST PARTY

Acharya Narendra Dev

THE history of Asian Renaissance is closely bound up with certain events in world history which were of great significance to the people of Asia. The first great event, under the impact of which the people of Asia felt the stirrings of a new life, was the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-1905. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the Asiatic people had after bitter experience come to the conclusion, that they were no match to Western Powers, who were immensely superior to them in the military arts. They lost all self-confidence and could not therefore entertain the idea of organising any further resistance to the foreigner. In our own country after the suppression of the Great Rebellion of 1857 the people were convinced that further resistance would be of no avail and that they should bow to the inevitable. The people of those parts which had been the scene of revolt were of course in a sullen mood and were seething with discontent and thus they took long to reconcile themselves to British Rule, but they did not think for a moment that they would never be able to recover their lost freedom. But in those parts of India, which remained more or less unaffected by revolt, and which were the first to receive the benefits of Western education, an English educated middle-class had grown up which developed an attachment for English culture and istitutions and had a deep conviction that British Rule in India was providential and ultimately for the good of the country.

One of the results of British Rule was the destruction of the rich and enterprising mercantile community of India which wielded much political influence in the country. By the Charter Act of 1833, the Company's monopoly was put to an end and free entry of Europeans was permitted. India was thus opened to British capital and enterprise.

Indian industries which were already languishing ultimately perished under fierce competition with machine-made goods imported from England. The fixed policy of the State was to prevent the industrialisation of India and to maintain it as a colony for supply of raw materials and for providing markets to England.

But a new aristocracy of landed interests was created in Bengal after the pattern of British landlords. The existing capital in the country which was formerly employed in commerce, now came to be invested in land: and everyone, who wanted to rise in the social ladder, had the ambition of becoming a landholder. Those among them who took advantage of English education took to the learned professions and aspired for Government posts. These two classes formed the basis of the new bourgeoisie and it was this class that was firmly attached to foreign rule. They had almost a child-like belief in the benevolent intentions of the British Government. Political institutions were started in Presidency towns and a few years later the idea of uniting educated India in an all-India organisation was conceived by a few leaders of public opinion. Mr. A. O. Hume, a retired civilian, also independently conceived the same idea. From the secret reports of the C. I. D., he had learnt that mass discontent was increasing and that the peasantry in many parts was on the verge of revolt. He wanted to prevent the repetition of the Indian mutiny and he came to the conclusion that the only remedy was to canalize the discontent into constitutional channels by forming an organization of the educated classes. Mr. Hume consulted the retired Anglo-Indians in England and also the Marquis of Dufferin, the then Governor-General of India. His original idea was that leading Indian politicians should meet annually to discuss social matters and to cultivate friendship with each other. He also wanted that the Governor of the province should be asked to preside over the gathering so that greater cordiality might be established between the officials and the leaders of public opinion. The Marquis of Dufferin, however, was of a different opinion and he suggested that the new organisation should perform the functions of an Opposition.

The new proposal was accepted by Mr. Hume and the leading politicians and thus the Indian National Congress came into being in 1885. Mr. Gokhale stated in 1913 on one occasion that no Indian could have started the Congress because the distrust of the political agitation was so great that the authorities could not have allowed it to come into existence.

Thus it is clear that it was in the interest of British Rule itself that the Congress was brought into existence. The rulers were ignorant of the feelings of the masses, nor could they rely upon the gentry of old schools brought up in old traditions. It was the new class of educated men who had been brought up in English schools, to whom they looked forward for strengthening their rule.

The question of the political tendency of Oriental and Occidental systems of education has been examined again and again by our rulers and they have almost invariably come to the conclusion that the system of western eduction is much more conducive to the retention of British connection than the indigenous system. Sir Charles Trevelyan writes in his book, "On the Education of the People of India" (1838):—"As long as the natives are left to brood over their former independence, their sole specific for improving their condition, is the immediate total expulsion of the English. A native patriot of the old school has no notion of anything beyond this: his attention has never been called to any other mode of restoring the dignity and prosperity of his country. It is only by the infusion of European ideas that a new direction can be given to the national views." (191). At another place he observes as follows:—"The existing connection between two such distant countries as England and India, cannot, in the nature of things, be permanent: no effort of policy can prevent the natives from ultimately regaining their independence. But there are two ways of arriving at this point. One of these is, through the medium of revolution: the other, through that of reform. In one, the forward movement is

sudden and violent; in the other, it is gradual and peaceable. One must end in the complete alienation of mind and separation of interests between ourselves and the natives; the other in a permanent alliance founded on mutual benefit and goodwill.

The only means at our disposal for preventing the one and securing the other class of results is to set the natives on a process of European improvement, to which they are already sufficiently inclined. They will then cease to desire and aim at an independence on the old Indian footing. A sudden change will then be impossible: and along continuance of our present connection in India will even be assured to us." (pp. 1921, 93.)

It was for this solid reason that at a time when India was passing through a crisis that the rulers were inclined to help in setting up an organisation of educated Indians for ventilating their grievances. This recognition of the educated middle-class by the rulers was calculated to increase its prestige in the eyes of the people and to help it in gaining their leadership.

The Congress started on its career without any clear aim or coherent policy. The President of the first session defined the objects of the Congress to be "the promotion of personal intimacy and friendship amongst all the earnest workers in different parts of the Empire and the authoritative record of the matured opinion of the educated classes in India on some of the more important and pressing of the social question of the day." In the political sphere all that he demanded was that the basis of the Government should be widened and that the people should have their proper and legitimate share in it. It was reiterated again and again by Congress leaders that they were the most loyal subjects of the British Empire and they always took special pains to refute the charge of disloyalty that was sometimes brought against them. But the social questions were not taken up by the Congress. It primarily concerned itself with political matters. Its demands were moderate in character and the method of securing fulfilment of the demands was one of prayer and protest. The Madras session of 1887 appointed a committee for framing rules of business. One of the rules recommended by this Committee was to the effect that permanent committees should be set up for carrying on propaganda on behalf of the Congress with the direction that while pointing out the shortcomings of the administration, people should be informed of the benefits and blessings conferred by British Rule in India and they should be told that Englishmen governed India with noble intentions. Even when, later on, they lost their faith in Indian bureaucracy, they still believed in the sense of fair play and justice of the British people. In 1889 the object of the Congress was declared to be to protect the interests of the inhabitants of the Indian Empire by constitutional means. After the split of the Congress in Surat, a Convention was held at Allahabad in 1908, in which the aim of the Congress was defined to be the attainment of colonial form of self-government by constitutional means.

It is indeed surprising that the evolution of political thought in India was very very slow and that it took some twenty-three years for the Congress to define its Goal for the attainment of self-government on colonial lines. The Congress still was not prepared for advocating severance of British connection and it took another twenty-one years for deciding in favour of the creed of complete independence.

This phenomenon is very rare in other subject countries. The Kuomintang (People's Party) of China, which was founded about 1890 was in the beginning a small party with no programme and with no democratic basis, but its aim was clearly formulated to be the destruction of Manchu rule and the methods that it adopted to achieve the end were not constitutional. It sought the aid of militarists in subverting the decrepit rule of the Manchus. Its mistake, however, lay in the fact that it failed to realise that the more formidable enemy was foreign imperialism and so long as realisation was not brought home to the Chinese people, they could not form a genuine people's party with an effective programme of work for attaining complete freedom.

It is noteworthy that Sunyat Sen also wanted to enlist the support of the democratic nations of the West in China's fight against Manchu rule and oppression. For him the real enemy was at home and he naively expected foreign imperialisms to help him in the task of destroying Manchu rule. Similarly his Indian compatriots pinned their faith upon the British people, though they no longer expected justice from English bureaucrats in India.

Everywhere in the East a new-class had arisen under the impact of progressive European culture. It was attracted by the liberal philosophy of the West and looked up to the European people for salvation. It became enamoured of European institutions which it wanted to establish in its own country with the help and guidance of foreigners.

In India the educated classes became "more English than Indians, just as the Roman provincials became more Roman than Gauls or Italians." The security of life and property which was the immediate result of British Rule after the anarchy and misrule that prevailed in various parts of the country as a result of the disintegrations of the Moghal Empire was the main cause of such a state of things.

Only a mighty event with rich revolutionary potentialities bringing in its train an upsurge of the people could change the psychology of the educated classes. The defeat of Russia by Japan in 1905 was such an event which rudely awakened the Asiatic people and made them conscious the first time of their destiny. They realised for the first time that their national character which prevented them from attaining political advancement. The old fatalistic submission to alien authority gave place to the new consciousness of national self-respect and assertion of manhood and the will that had suffered paralysis began at last to recover its lost vigour. There arose amongst them great leaders of men who refused to set any limitations on their national aspirations and who realised the truth that India could not achieve her destiny by holding aloft a beggar's bowl. They came to the conclusion that it was only by self-assertion and by organising various national activities independently of the rulers that they could ever hope to achieve their objective. They spoke without fear and evasion and they hated the language of diplomacy. It was their profound faith in the destiny of the people that gave them courage to defy the will of authority. They abandoned the policy of political mendicancy which was hitherto being followed and did not look up to the rulers for their salvation. A new party was formed to give effect to this new policy. This new school held that freedom could be achieved only through the organised strength of the nation and that without political freedom, social, educational, economic and moral uplift of a people was impossible. The adherents of this new system of thought advocated self-help and preached swadeshi and boycott to the people. 'Boycott' did not mean only boycott of British goods but it also included withdrawal of all co-operation with the British in every sphere of administration and public activity. The party therefore preached renunciation of titles and boycott of Government courts, of councils and local bodies. The party further endeavoured to promote the growth of nascent industries for securing the economic independence of the people. Thus the boycott was a political weapon and was conceived to be of a comprehensive character. The party also formulated the policy of organised resistance to constituted authority and accepted the doctrine of passive resistance if the bureaucracy offered opposition to the people in their execution of the policy of self-help. This resistance could also be aggressive, if it ever became necessary to do so. Further, this resistance was to be organised not for securing particular grievance but for the creation of a free democratic government. The superiority of the new party consisted in its realisation of the basic truths of modern politics. In their hands Indian politics gave up the old shibboleths and its solid foundations were laid for the first time. The entire political outlook of the old school was rooted in English history and as they had no faith in their own people and were dominated by an overwhelming sense of might of Britain, they could not discover for themselves the true path of

salvation. The new party also succeeded in destroying many of the old illusions, to which our leaders of the moderate school still passionately clung.

A controversy that raged over the constitution that was adopted by the Convention Congress in 1908, clearly brought out the differences that divided the new party from the old. The new party wanted the Congress to be a democratic organisation and made a demand for a written constitution, while the old wanted it to remain an oligarchy. Another point of difference was whether the movement would be progressive and national or conservative in its aim, policy and spirit. Other questions which divided the party, were the exact form of Swaraj to be held forward as an ideal and the policy of passive resistance. The new party did not regard colonial self-government as a practical proposition for India or as its ultimate goal. In the words of Shri Aurobindo Ghosh: "By convention the Congress adopted a constitution which was close, exclusive, undemocratic and so framed as to limit the free election of delegates by the people. The Nationalist Party stood for democracy, constitutionalism and progress. The Moderate Party, governed by an exaggerated respect for old and esteemed leaders, helped, without clearly understanding what they did, those who stood for oligarchy, arbitrary procedure and an almost reactionary conservatism." (An Open Letter to my Countrymen 1908.)

The tenets of the new party which called itself the Nationalist Party, and was known in common parlance as the Extremist Party, have been set forth above. Boycott, in its wider sense, was practised in Eastern Bengal with some amount of success. National schools were organised, Panchayats were established, and the spirit of Swadeshi was inculcated amongst the people. Law was generally respected, not because it would have been immoral to break it, but because in the initial stage of the new movement, it would have been impolitic and inexpedient to do so. The new idea gathered adherents in all parts of the country, but it was chiefly in Bengal that it rapidly gained ground. From the very beginning it had to meet the onslaught of the Government, but after the Surat split, the Government came down upon it with terrific repression. Its leaders were either arrested or they went into voluntary exile. As the new Congress creed was not acceptable to the party, its members kept out of the Congress for many years. The Congress was extremely weakened by these secessions and lost its hold on the masses. The movement was driven underground and gave birth to terrorist groups in the country which believed in the cult of the bomb and the revolver. There were many examples of personal courage and supreme sacrifice, but terrorism could not be the sovereign remedy of our ills.

In 1916 however, through the efforts of Mrs. Besant, the two wings were reunited and though the Nationalist Party came back to the Congress, it had watered down much of its old idealism in the interest of unity. It no doubt rapidly gained in influence, but unfortunately there was not much to distinguish it from the old liberals. Many of the tenets of the new party were, however, re-established in the non-co-operation days and much of what was practised on a small scale in 1906—1908 was now practised on a nationwide scale in 1921-22. But the truth remained that the tenets of the Nationalist Party did constitute the foundation on which a genuine national movement was ultimately built.

It has been stated by some writers that this new movement was reactionary in some of its aspects. Though it is true that many of the principal exponents of this new thought were powerfully influenced by Hindu culture, it remained a fact that in their writings and speeches, they always stressed only vital elements of the ancient culture. The following passage from an editorial of the "Bandemataram" (1908) will illustrate the point:—"Metaphysical and sentimental abstractions have been the greatest limitations of our thought and culture of the past and are largely if not entirely, responsible for the loss of our ancient and honoured place in the universal life of humanity. To indulge in these abstractions even

more, would spell a continuance of our present bondage and degradation We have too long sought a kind of peace within by fanciful negations and a deliberate denial of the actual struggles without. In the new renaissance of Asiatic, and specially, of Indian culture, the old spiritual ideals of Asia, and especially of India, will have to be carefully and critically separated from the fatal abstractions and unrealities with which they have been so woefully fixed up".

Vedanta became a dynamic philosophy in their hands and Lokamanya, by writing his commentary on the Bhagwat Gita, preached the philosophy of action.

Again, many of them were modern in their outlook as can be well established from their writings. The use of some of our popular festivals for political purposes, is no evidence of their being reactionary in social and religious matters. This method of political education was considered to be a potent method of doing political work among the masses. Institution of festivals in honour of national heroes, was one of the ways of arousing patriotic sentiments of the people. Certainly no one will accuse Lokamanya of dreaming to revive the old Maratha empire or Hindu Pad-Padshahi when he organised the Shivaji festival. His opposition to the Age of Consent Bill is cited against him in proof of the allegation that he had a reactionary outlook in social matters. His objection, however, was not so much to the raising of the marriageable age of girls, as to the desirability of allowing a Government, alien in race and culture, to interfere with social and religious institutions and practices of the Indian people. His principal field of activity was politics, and he did not want to associate himself with a movement of social reform which would hamper his political work amongst the orthodox section. This was a matter of expediency with him. He did not want introduction of social reform by legislation, but by education and propaganda. At least such a charge can in no case be brought against other stalwarts of the party who were ardent social reformers.

The pioneering work of the new party in the realm of ideas was fruitful and it should occupy an honoured place in our National history. It was the Nationalist Party that placed the national movement on a sound basis and clearly defined for the first time its aims and objectives and formulated the methods by which they could be achieved. It stands to its credit that very little has been added during the last twenty-five years to the policy and programme which was originally formulated by it. A new orientation has indeed been given to the Congress policy in recent years under the impact of Socialist thought. But in the present era this is quite natural for all progressive movements. The principal achievements of the new era is that it has put into practice in a nation-wide scale what the Nationalist Party preached in 1906-1908. Gandhiji's chief contribution in the political field has been in the sphere of evolving new methods of struggle and putting them into practice, but here also we must not forget that passive resistance was conceived in 1906 as an integral part of the new policy. A vigorous policy of self-help and self-assertion is at the root of all dynamic national movements and the Nationalist Party, so ably led by Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobinda Ghosh, formulated and followed such a policy. The year 1905 thus stands out prominently in the history of our freedom movement as the year that saw the re-birth of an ancient people that had lost its freedom and vitality and the party that was born out of this upheaval, was the Nationalist Party which gave a new lead to the people and prescribed the sovereign remedy for regaining our freedom.

LOKAMANYA TILAK AND THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

Shri N. C. Kelkar

The editor of this volume has kindly asked me to contribute an article to it on the subject of Lok. Tilak. But considering that this is a Congress Commemoration Volume, I would like to write only on that aspect of Lok. Tilak's life, which bears on his relations with the Indian National Congress.

It is well known that Tilak was a constant and consistent follower of the Congress throughout his life. The great leader of Poona—the late Mr. Mahadeo Govind Ranade—was, it is well known, one of those three or four Indian Political leaders who at first conceived the idea of such an institution as the I. N. Congress. It is also well known that the first session of the Congress should have been held at Poona itself if the sudden appearance of cholera in Poona had not come in its way. In the year 1885, the year of the birth of the Congress, Mr. Tilak was an ardent admirer and follower of Mr. Ranade in fact the friend, philosopher and guide of the educational institution—the Deccan Education Society—of which Mr. Tilak was a founder member. Mr. Tilak and his contemporary generation of public-spirited men looked on Mr. Ranade as their acclaimed leader, and Mr. Ranade indeed deserved the homage of this generation because he was, though himself a government servant, really a fountain head and the inspiring genius of all the new public activities in Poona, about the year 1881, like trees suddenly blossoming in summer. And if the Congress had been held in Poona, Mr. Tilak would have been among the secretaries, or a young active member of the Reception Committee of that session.

The first important Congress which Mr. Tilak attended was held in Bombay in 1839. He also concerned himself with the arrangements of one of the political provincial conferences which were held in Poona. But it must be noted that even then, there were two parties in the Congress movement, with a slight difference of mental attitude characterising them. One was the Moderate Party headed by Mr. Ranade and Mr. Pherozeshah Mehta, among whose followers the late Mr. Gokhale was a prominent and active figure. The other party was the Nationalist party. But at this time it was comparatively dormant and lying low, and had not yet acquired that strength which would make it stand on its own legs and give an open fight with the Moderate Party. This party may be called the party of the Extremists, though it was not yet recognised by that name. While the moderate party consisted of Sardars, Jaigirdars, Government pensioners, even Government servants and a few social reformers of the time, the extremist part consisted of a few orthodox leaders of Hindu religious opinion, a few liberal-minded merchants, and more notably the young band of pleaders, journalists and educationists who took their inspiration from the late Mr. Vishnushastri Chiplonkar, the editor of *Nibandh-Mala* and an author of repute.

Things came to a head with these two parties in 1895, when the Congress was to be held in Poona itself. There was a tussle between the two parties as to who should capture the Reception Committee, so that it may have the leading strings in its own hands. And it was proved for the time that Mr. Ranade and Mr. Gokhale and the social reformers could wield a preponderating influence in Maharashtra and also had the required financial backing. Mr. Tilak had no rich friends of his own and was consequently kept in a small minority, and eventually also of the Congress. But he could have his revenge, because Mr. Ranade intended to hold the annual session of the Indian social conference in the very pandal in which the Congress session was to be held. But so violent was the prejudice against the social reformers of the time that ultimately Mr. Ranade had to yield and give up the Congress pandal, and to hold the social conference in a separate pandal, specially raised for it. The result was that Mr. Tilak could not figure prominently in the Congress proceedings, though I think he was one of the speakers. I may incidentally also mention that I attended that Poona Congress as an elected delegate from Satara where I was then practising as a pleader. Tilak had also scored against Ranade and Gokhale by winning the first election of a representative of the District Local Boards in the Bombay Province to the Bombay Legislative Council.

In 1897 Tilak was prosecuted and convicted for sedition. The Congress leaders sympathised with Tilak in this matter, though they did not come out openly with any expression of protestant opinion in the Congress sessions of 1897 and 1898. Tilak attended the Congress Session at Madras

in 1988 and at Lucknow in 1899. After this he was involved in a criminal prosecution arising out of the well-known Tai Maharaj Case and consequently could not put in any Congress activity. But I very well remember that he had conferences with Sir William Wederburn, Sir Henry Cotton and also figured very prominently in the Congress held at Bombay in the year 1904. It was at this Congress that complaints were first made against the inactivity of the top-most Congress leaders, and Tilak openly sided with Lala Lajpatrai in the quarrel which the latter had in the Subjects Committee with Pherozeshah Mehta who was opposing the idea of a constitution for the Congress on the ground that it was rather premature. From here to the well-known Surat Congress of 1907, Tilak had a running controversy with the moderate leaders of the Congress movement. The Swadeshi movement had already started. Bengal and Maharashtra were leading the movement shoulder to shoulder. The Moderate political leaders had openly expressed their displeasure and anger against Lord Curzon for his general reactionary administration. They were also opposed to Partition of Bengal and protested against it publicly. Bengal showed a wonderful union of moderates and the extremists in the partition and swadeshi movements. But the moderate leaders on Bombay side were lukewarm about the swadeshi movement as a political weapon to be used in the Partition movement, or in fact in any political movement on the ground that it unnecessarily antagonised British public opinion and created bitter racial feeling at a time when India had no Swadeshi goods of her own to show to satisfy even the barest wants of the Indian People.

The break-up of the Surat Congress was no doubt an unpleasant affair. It marked a direct open breach between the Moderate and the Nationalist parties not only in Maharashtra but throughout India. For the first time in the history of the Congress even up to date there was at Surat an open fight between the delegates of the Congress and some blood was drawn. But it did not stop at that. The split led to a cleavage in the sense that the name of the Indian National Congress had to be kept in abeyance for the time and a new entity called the *convention* was installed in its place. Of course as the name itself implies the Convention was a stop-gap expedient, intended to function in the place of the Congress only up till such time as the national Congress could meet again in its old form. The old form had this peculiarity that there was not much ceremony observed in the election of the delegates to the Congress. There were no conditions of membership. There was no constitution as such for the Congress, no election of delegates. In fact the membership was open to any one that might choose to attend the Congress session as a delegate. There was no competition as such in the election of the delegates for the simple reason that there was no numerical allotment fixed for any province. It was an open rally of all that chose to attend. But this comfortable arrangement worked nicely till the Surat Congress because the honour of delegation was at a discount instead of at a premium. But it was not so only till 1908. The old position was restored to the Congress between the years 1916 and 1921. For it was not till 1921 that a constitution as such for the Congress came into operation with conditions of membership. The Convention did not give a constitution to the Congress but it only restricted delegation to only such persons as would sign a prescribed creed formula in which the peaceful and constitutional aspect of political agitation was emphasized, the goal being ofcourse self-government of the colonial type. The Convention was built up like a citadel with a trench around it so that he alone could enter it who possessed a passport at the hands of trustworthy agents of the Congress, in other words the leaders of the Moderate Party.

Tilak and his party were of course ousted from the Convention because they would not sign a prescribed creed of political faith, which practically excluded the ideal of independence, if only an ideal so far. The Convention and the Nationalist party met in two separate camps at Surat, the former under the presidency of Sir Pherozshah Mehta and the latter under the presidency of Babu Aurobindo Ghosh. It must be noted here that even with this definite split in the Congress each

party duly affirmed its love for the Congress which alone was regarded as the true national Assembly for the country and in both the camps the hope was expressed that sooner or later there might again be held a Congress united as before.

The break-up of the Surat Congress had its own weight against Tilak in bringing about his prosecution. Nobody could openly allege the break-up of the Congress as a criminal offence, but the split was taken into consideration by the government as an open challenge to the policy of constitutional agitation. After Tilak's conviction by the High Court, the National party led by him became sullen and almost went underground. For six years, from 1908 to 1914, the Nationalist party could not decide as to what it should do about entering the Congress. There was an attempt made to call a meeting of a rival Congress at Nagpur. But while government banned the session there was also want of unanimity in the party itself about the starting of a rival Congress which might make the split absolutely permanent. The cooler wings in the Party thought that there was no wisdom in setting up a rival to the old Congress as without unity among political parties the show as presented by separate parties was found to be poor. A group within the Tilak Party was trying to negotiate matters with the leaders of the Moderate party for making the entry of this group and others of its persuasion into the Congress on its own terms, that is to say, without the restriction of a creed and with the old facilities for unfettered election of delegates. But the other view was more insistent and prevailed namely that nothing should be done in this matter until Tilak returned from Mandalay.

Things came to a head after his return. It was soon discovered that Tilak was against setting up of a rival Congress though by this time it was also discovered that the Moderate party had a very poor following in the Congress, so much so that the total number of delegates of the Congress at one time did not mount to even 350, though the session was held under the presidency of such an illustrious per onage as Pandit Malaviya, and also held in the vantage ground of northern India. This loyal attitude of Tilak towards the Congress* was well-known to the Moderates but was not appreciated by them. In fact they resisted by every means in their power, all efforts made by Tilak and his friends of the Moderate party, to re-enter the Congress. I well remember personally being deputed to meet Sir S. P. Sinha, who presided over the Congress at Bombay in 1915, to discuss with him the possibilities of a re-united Congress. In the meanwhile the European Allies having nearly won the war it looked as if the British Government might play its usual trick of opening negotiations with Indian politicians for further political advance. Both Tilak and Mrs. Besant joined hands for seizing this opportunity and two Home Rule Leagues were formed, one in Maharashtra and the other in Madras. By the time of the Lucknow Congress in 1916, most of the open sores were healed. There was an urge in the mind of both Parties towards re-union on honourable conditions. Some conditions about the membership of the Congress were agreed to, and the Moderate Party opened its arms to the Nationalist Party. Tilak attended the Lucknow Congress after an absence of 8 years and was given the honours of the one and sole political hero of the time. Mahatma Gandhi was practically in the background at the time. His mind was in two places like an auction bid, and it may be mentioned that Gandhi was elected to the Subjects Committee of the Lucknow Congress by the insistent followers of Tilak and in the teeth of opposition by delegates from Bombay of all places. The Home Rule League was in no sense a rival to the Congress. It was only an inset within the Congress and valuable inset at that. Because it lent a sort of glamour of advanced political opinion to the Congress, reinforced curiously by the fact of the staunch loyalty to the Congress on the part of both Tilak and Mrs. Besant. It must also be mentioned that the Moderate group in the Congress could not yet make up its mind to instal Tilak as the president of the Congress. But it was well known that Tilak never hankered after this honour. On the contrary, he had determined to practise an ordinance of self-denial in this matter, for it was well known that though elected

president of the Congress which was to have been, but was not held, in 1907, in Nagpur by the Reception Committee at Nagpur, Tilak withdrew his name and suggested that of Lala Lajpat Rai in his own place. For two years however, that is to say, in 1916 and 1917, Tilak was of course the leading figure at the annual Congress session and also at the special session held at Bombay. It was practically on the eve of Tilak's departure for England for the prosecution of the Chirol case, that he was elected to the presidentship of the Congress, but he was of course unable to accept it for he was given a passport to England only for the Chirol case business, and it was not expected that he could find time to devote to politics during his stay in England. He resigned it since it was of no practical use to him for some time. But he carried with him the capacity of the president of the Tilak Home Rule League and gave evidence to the Parliamentary Select Committee on Montague's Government of India Bill, as the Chirol case was disposed off and there was an open invitation by the British Government to all Indian political partiest to send delegations to England for the purpose. The last thing to be mentioned in connection with relations between Tilak and the Congress is the collection of a crore of rupees by Mahatma Gandhi in the name of the Tilak Swaraj Fund, though it must also be mentioned that this Fund was spent on activities and propaganda to which Tilak cannot be supposed to have given his cordial approval, namely the non-co-operation policy and the cult of *Ahimsa* as a political means.

I may sum up this contribution briefly by saying that Tilak was till his death absolutely loyal to the Indian National Congress of the old type, that is to say, the type in which the Congress would function as a free, unfettered, political body without any creeds or formulas of moral philosophy or religious attitude fastened on it. He wanted the Congress to be thoroughly representative of the political opinion of all shades and colours in the country. He would not care who got an upper hand at the helm of the Congress affairs if only the minority groups were not debarred from a free participation and expression of their own views from the Congress platform. He hated the formation of cliques in the Congress trusting always that the prevalent public opinion in the country would assert itself in such form as it may choose at every annual session of the Congress. He would welcome in the Congress body the utter loyalist as well as the rank Communist or Socialist. He would have attached some importance to Hindu-Muslim unity, and had made himself responsible for approval of what is known as the Congress-League Pact of Lucknow. But he would never have gone the length to which Mahatma Gandhi had gone in this matter. He would have, in my opinion, voted for reserved seats for minorities but would have opposed communal electorates. His ideas of independence were developing in tune with the times and had he lived by this time he would welcome and work for an independent India on the present Congress level. He was however regarded as a man of practical affairs always ready for a compromise though unshaken in his personal views. In short he was in himself a typical combination of both political idealism and realism, so often seen in many successful leaders of the Congress.



TWENTYTHIRD SESSION– Surat 1907
(Suspended)

President : Dr. Rash Behari Ghose

Chairman of the Reception Committee :
Tribhuvandas N. Malvi

President

Born 1845. Top lawyer in Calcutta High Court. Member Bengal Legislative Council 1889. Member of the Imperial Legislative Council 1891 and 1893. President of the Faculty of Law, Calcutta University 1893—1895. Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Calcutta Session of Congress 1906. President Indian National Congress Surat 1907. President Indian National Congress Madras 1908. Member of the Congress delegation to England 1917. Presided over the joint session of India Congress Committee and the Councils of the Muslims League at Calcutta 1917. Protested against the internment of Mrs. Besant. Gave away large donations to Calcutta University. Died in 1921.

Details of the Session

The Congress was to be held at Nagpur and the reception Committee there wished to have Lokamanya Tilak as President of the Session. This being not acceptable, to the Moderate Leaders, the venue was changed to Surat by the All-India Congress Committee. The Moderates had decided to have Dr. Rash Behari Ghosh as President. About a week or so before the Session the list of the subjects to be discussed was published. But it did not include resolutions on Swaraj, Swadeshi, Boycott, and National education. The Nationalists decided to fight against this divergence from the policy laid down by the Calcutta Congress. They wished Lala Lajpat Rai to occupy the chair. Under the circumstances he did not like to preside. There was oppositions in the session led by Lokamanya Tilak and the Moderate leaders tried to ride roughshod in suppressing it. This gave rise to confusion and disturbances, a general melee and shoes were hurled and blows were exchanged. The session had to be adjourned and there was a complete parting of the ways between the Moderates and the Nationalists. Congress became a moderate body for a number of years.

TWENTYTHIRD SESSION—Madras 1908

President : Dr. Rash Behari Ghose.

Chairman of the Reception Committee :
V. Krishnaswami Iyer

General Secretaries : D. E. Wacha and D. A. Khare.

Delegates : 617

Details of the Session

The convention of Moderate leaders had drawn up a constitution for the Congress which practically excluded the Nationalists. The Congress at Madras was a Moderate show. The resolution on Swadeshi and national education were watered

down and the resolution on boycott was omitted. There was a resolution giving premature and unqualified approval of the Minto-Morley reforms. The old usual resolutions were reiterated.

TWENTYFOURTH SESSION—Lahore 1909

President : PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA.
General Secretaries : D. E. Wacha and D. A. Khare
Delegates : 243



PRESIDENT

Born 1864. Took to journalism and edited 'Indian Union' 1825-1899. Practised Law from 1892. Member Provincial Legislative Council 1902-1912. President U. P. Medical Conference 1908. President Indian National Congress Lahore 1909 and Delhi 1918. Member Imperial Legislative Council 1912-1918. Resigned as a protest against the Rowlatt Act. Member Industrial Commission 1916-1918 and wrote Minority report. Founder Benares Hindu University and its Vice-Chancellor 1919-1939. Member Central Legislative Assembly 1924-1930. Resigned as a protest against Imperial Preference policy. Imprisoned twice during the Civil Disobedience movement 1930-32. Delegate to the second Round Table Conference 1931. President of the two banned sessions of the Congress in 1932 and 1933. President Hindu Mahasabha 1923, 1936. Resigned from Congress Parliamentary Board 1934 on the question of communal award, and formed Nationalist Party. Retired from active politics due to old age. Died 1946.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

Minto-Morley Reforms had just been introduced. Congress was engaged mostly with them. It recorded dis-approval of the creation of separate electorates and expressed its dissatisfaction at the unfairly disproportionate and excessive weightage given to the Muslims. It urged the formation of Executive councils in U. P., Punjab, Bengal, Assam and Burma. Protested against the supervision upon the discriminatory constitutional arrangements in the Punjab, C. P. and Berar. As usual it protested against the ever growing military expenditure. Funds for helping Gandhiji's Passive resistance movement were collected.

TWENTYFIFTH SESSION—Allahabad 1910

President : SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN
General Secretaries : D. E. Wacha and D. A. Khare
Delegates : 636



DETAILS OF THE SESSION

King Edward VII died and George V was crowned. The seed of separate electorates had already begun to bear fruit and there were communal disturbances. The Congress urged

formation of conciliation boards to prevent these. It strongly deprecated the expansion of the number of separate electorates to the municipalities and district boards and other local bodies as was proposed to be done by the Government. Mr. Jinnah deprecated this extension. The South African struggle had developed and the Congress expressed its admiration at the heroic courage and suffering.

TWENTYSIXTH SESSION—Calcutta 1911

President : PANDIT BISHEN NARAYAN DHAR

General Secretaries : D. E. Wacha and D. A. Khare

Delegates : 446



PRESIDENT

Born 1864. Set up practice as barrister in 1887. Participated effectively in the Madras Congress of 1887 and 1894. Member Calcutta Municipal Corporation. President U. P. Conference at Lucknow in 1908. President Indian National Congress, Calcutta 1911. Member of Bengal Legislative Council 1914. Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Congress at Lucknow 1916. Noted writer and public man of U. P. Died 1916.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

The Partition of Bengal had been annulled. A new province of Bihar had been created. The Capital had been transferred to Delhi. Lord Hardinge had acknowledged the place of Provincial autonomy in the scheme of national reconstruction. Indentured labour in South Africa had been abolished. The Congress met in a spirit of jubilation and passed resolutions of gratitude for all these acts. There was, of course the reiteration of the resolutions protesting against the Seditious Meetings Act, Press Act, Criminal Law Amendment Act and other repression laws, the excise duty on cotton goods and a demand to release all political prisoners. Lokamanya Tilak was ailing and confined in the port of Mandalay. Gandhiji had led Transvaal Indian community through suffering to success in South Africa.

TWENTYSEVENTH SESSION—Bankipore 1912

President : R. N. MODHOLKAR.

General Secretaries : D. E. Wacha and D. A. Khare.



PRESIDENT

Born 1857. Fellow of Elphinston College 1877. Set up law practice in C. P. Established Berar Trading Co. Ltd. Started Vaidarbha newspaper. Established Berar Sarvajanik Sabha 1888. Was its Secretary till 1898. Joined Indian Congress 1898. Congress delegate to

England 1890. Secretary Reception Committee of the Congress session at Amraoti 1897. Organised branch of the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund 1897. President C. P. and Berar Provincial Conference at Raipur 1897. Sided with Moderates after Surat split. President Indian National Congress 1912. Died 1921.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

The Congress expressed disappointment at the non-removal of the defects in the reforms, prayed for an elected majority in the Imperial and Provincial Councils. Demanded an executive council in Punjab and again condemned extension of separate electorates to local bodies. But the Congress opined that a person ignorant of the English language should be ineligible for membership of the local bodies. Expressed satisfaction at the recommendation by the Government of the necessity of introducing provincial autonomy. There was a large number of Moderate delegates at the session. Mr. Mazhar-ul-Haq who was chairman of the Reception Committee had said, "Already great and powerful party of liberal Muslims had arisen whose aims and ideals were the same as those of the Congress and this was the party which was bound to lead, in future, the Muslims of India."

TWENTYEIGHT SESSION Karachi 1913

President:—NAWAB SYED MOHAMMAD BAHADUR.

General Secretaries: D.A. Khare and D.E. Wacha

Delegates: 349



PRESIDENT

Born 1869. Came of a famous family of Jagirdars; Khan Bahadur, Nawab 1897. Member of Madras Legislative Council 1900-1902. Later member of Imperial Council. First joined Congress 1894. Chairman Reception Committee Madras Session 1903. Member of Standing Committee of the Congress 1906. President Indian National Congress 1913. Joint Secretary 1915, 1916 of the Congress. Died 1916.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

Karachi Congress saw the beginning of Hindu Muslim entente. The All-India Muslim League had adopted goal of self-government and the resolution was passed and speeches made on the union for self-government of the Congress and the Muslim League. Session was chiefly occupied, however, with the question of the status of Indians in South Africa. Mr. Gandhi had recently returned from South Africa, and had related the story. Carefully perceived the heroic struggles carried on by Gandhiji and his co-workers and called upon the country for support to them.

TWENTYNINTH SESSION—Madras 1914

President: BHUPENDRANATH BASU
General Secretaries:
N. Subba Rao and Nawab Syed Mahommed Bahadur
Delegates: 866



PRESIDENT

Born 1869. Started practice as a lawyer 1884. Captained the volunteer corps Calcutta Congress 1886. Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Congress at Calcutta 1911. Took leading part in the Unity-partition agitation but was moderate by temperament. Was a member of the Bengal and Central Legislative Councils. President Indian National Congress 1914. Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University for 2 years. Member of the Council of the Secretary of State for India. Joined the Liberal Federation. Died 1924.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

War had been declared in Europe and Congress passed its resolution on loyalty and promise of help. But this was coupled with the demand for opening higher ranks of the Army to the Indians, establishment of military education and repeal of the Arms Act. The demand for self-government and adoption of the India Council reforms was reiterated. Mrs. Besant moved a bold resolution of reciprocity urging that India should exclude imports from countries from which her people were excluded.

THIRTIETH SESSION—Bombay 1915

President: SIR SATYENDRA PRASANNA SINHA.
Chairman of the Reception Committee:
Dinshaw Eduljee Wacha
General Secretaries:
Nawab Syed Mahommed Bahadur and N. Subba Rao
Delegates: 2259



PRESIDENT

Born in June 1864. Ran away to England in 1881 and with the help of a scholarship prosecuted his studies. Was called to the bar in 1886. Returned to India and set up practice at Calcutta. Spoke at the Calcutta Congress. Advocate General of Bengal 1908. First Indian to be made Law Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, 1909. President, Indian National Congress, Bombay 1915. Representative at the Imperial Conference, 1917. Represented India at the War Conference 1917 and again 1918. Was made Under-Secretary of State. Raised to the peerage as Lord Sinha of Raipur. Piloted the Government of India Bill through the House of Lords. Member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. First Indian to be appointed Governor. Governor of Bihar and Orissa, 1921. Resigned after one year. Died 5th March 1928.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

Demanded an Executive Council for the United Provinces. Asked for the establishment of High Courts in Punjab, Burma and Central Provinces with the status and powers of chartered High Courts. Opined that complete fiscal freedom was necessary with special reference to import, export and excise duties. Asked the A. I. C. C. to frame a scheme of reform and a programme of work, educative and propagandist and authorised the committee to confer with the All-India Muslim League Council for the same purpose and to take such further measures as may be necessary. New constitution of the Congress was framed so as to admit the Nationalist delegates. Tilak responded by announcing the willingness of his party to re-enter the Congress. An interesting feature of the Congress was Gandhiji could not be elected to the Subjects Committee and was nominated by the President.

THIRTYFIRST SESSION Lucknow 1916

President : THE HON. AMBICA CHARAN MAZUMDAR.
Chairman of the Reception Committee :
Hon. Pandit Jagat Narayan.
General Secretaries : Nawab Syed Mahommed Bahadur and N. Subba Rao
Delegates : 2301



PRESIDENT

Born 1851. Graduated in 1873 from the Presidency College, Calcutta and later became an M.A. Qualified as a lawyer and set up practice in 1879. Was associated with the Congress almost from its very inception and spoke at several sessions of the Congress. Great orator. Participated in the Anti-partition agitation. Represented Bengal at the War Conference. Member of the Legislature for two terms. President, Indian National Congress, Lucknow 1916. Wrote "Indian National Evolution."

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

A historic session in many ways. Tilak, Bepin Chandra Pal, Khaparde and other nationalist leaders participated and fraternised with Rash Behari Ghose and Surendranath Banerjee and other Moderates. Also fraternisation of Muslims and Hindus. The Muslim League also holds its session at Lucknow. The Congress League scheme for reforms passed and sent to the Viceroy. Muslim League for the first time, declared self-government as its goal, elected majorities in the Councils, extended power to the council half the Viceroy's executive council to be Indians. This Congress League Scheme conceded separate electorates for Muslims and representational weightage for the minorities in the legislatures. In the Central Government and in those provinces where Muslims were in a minority, the number of Muslim seats would be somewhat greater than their percentage in the population concerned, while in the Muslim Majority Provinces like Bengal and Punjab they would get less than their due proportion of seats. Bepin Chandra Pal spoke before enthusiastic crowds at the Muslim League session. Resolutions vigorously protesting against Defence of India Act and Regulation III of 1818 which had been used to suppress Indian nationalism. Condemnation of Arms Act and Press Act. Support for Swadeshi movement. Lord and Lady Meston attended the Congress and were presented with an address.

THIRTYSECOND SESSION—Calcutta 1917

President : MRS. ANNIE BESANT
Chairman of the Reception Committee :
P. R. Baikuntha Nath Sen.
General Secretaries : C. P. Ramaswami Iyer,
P. Kesava Pillay and Bhurgri
Delegates : 4967



PRESIDENT

Born 1847. Married December 1867. A son and daughter—Legally separated from husband 1873. Came under the influence of Charles Bradlaugh and was appointed Vice-President of National Secular Society and Sub-Editor National Reformer 1877. Knowlton Pamphlet prosecution. Formed the Malthusian League. Came in contact with Madame Blavatsky 1882. Leaned towards socialism and conducted the Socialistic paper "Our Corner" 1813. Edited "Link" 1888. Joined the Theosophical Society 1889. Attended Labour Congress, Paris 1889. Visited Chicago Parliament of Religions 1893. Came to India November 1893. Started School at Benares 1892, which developed into the Hindu University Central College 1904. President of the Theosophical Society June 1907. Inaugurated Home Rule agitation 1913. Started "Commonwealth" a weekly and New India a daily. Security of Rs. 20,000 from New India 1916. Prohibited entry into Bombay and C. P. Interned at Ootacamund June 1917. President Indian National Congress Calcutta 1917. Supported the Montague Chelmsford Reforms and opposed Gandhiji's non-co-operation. Supported Independence resolution, Madras Congress 1927. Powerful speaker, writer, organiser and social worker. Made India her home and was a great force in Indian regeneration. Died 1933.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

Though dominated by extremists the Congress declared their "deep loyal and profound attachment to the throne and resolve to stand by the empire at all hazards and costs." Asked for the release of Ali Brothers. Resolutions on military training, indentured labour, condemnation of the Rowlatt Committee, Press Act, Arms Act and disabilities of Indians in colonies, main resolution on self-government. Asking for time limit of establishment of responsible self-government, and immediate introduction of Congress League scheme as a first step. The Tri-colour flag was introduced for the first time.

BESANT'S HOME RULE CAMPAIGN AND MONTAGUE CHELMSFORD REFORMS

The year 1917 was an eventful year. The policy of the government was to repress the nationalist and revolutionary movement on the one hand and to win over the Moderates on the other. This was the purpose behind the visit of Mr. Montague to India. Mrs. Besant started a wide popular agitation in favour of Home Rule throughout the country and this was followed by an ever-increasing severity of police repression. The Home Rule League was established all over the country and was counted among its co-workers such names as Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, and Mr. Jinnah. In June 1917 Mrs. Besant's paper New India was called upon to furnish a security of Rs. 20,000. A deputation consisting of Messrs. Jinnah, Shrinivasa Sastri, Sapru, and Wazhir Hussein was sent to England to press for the scheme of reforms. A proposal for passive resistance was seriously considered by various provincial Congress Committees in 1917 for the release of political internees including the Ali Brothers and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad but was later dropped.

Gandhiji, during this year, was engaged in investigating the grievances of the tenants of Champaran against the Indigo Planters and kept aloof from the Home Rule Movement. His co-workers included Babu Rajendra Prasad, Kishore Babu and Acharya Kripalani and others. The start of the Ahmedabad Textile Labour and their successful fight against the Millowners was also made this year by Gandhiji and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

The Reforms report was released in July 1918 and was at once a source of sharp cleavage between the Moderates and the Nationalists in India. Right wing leaders at a Conference in Calcutta presided over by Surendranath Banerjee supported the reforms scheme. But the Left wing, the Nationalists, at Bengal provincial conference presided over by Bepin Chandra Pal, condemned it. Lokamanya Tilak was interned in August 1918. The Defence of India Act was vigorously at work everywhere. Lokamanya had undertaken to help in the recruitment for the war if self-government was promised. Gandhiji's co-operation at this time was without any condition. A special session of the Congress was to be held at Bombay for considering the reforms scheme but the Moderates kept aloof from it. A separate Moderates conference was held also at Bombay under the presidentship of Surendranath Banerjea and passed a resolution welcoming the reform proposals as constituting a distinct advance on the present conditions both as regards Government of India and the Provincial Governments. They suggested some minor changes to the proposals and appointed a committee to select a deputation to support the Montague Chelmsford reform scheme in England.

THIRTYTHIRD SESSION—Bombay 1918

President: HASAN IMAM

Chairman of the Reception Committee:
Vithalbhai J. Patel

General Secretaries: C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, P. Kesava Pillay and Bhurgri.

Delegates: 3500.



PRESIDENT

Born 1871. Went to England 1889 and was Secretary of the Indian Society. There worked for Dadabhai Naoroji's election. Called to the Bar and returned to India 1892. Excellent practice in Patna and Calcutta. Judge of the Calcutta High Court April 1911. Resigned and reverted to Patna Bar 1913. Gave equal donations to Benares and Aligarh Universities. President, Behari Student's Conference, Gaya 1909. President, Behari Provincial Conference 1917. Trustee of the Aligarh College 1911. President, Indian National Congress, Special Session Bombay 1918. Supported Gandhiji's Satyagraha movement against the Rowlatt Bills. Led the Home Rule League Deputation in England. Joined the Indian Muslim delegation in London to present the case of the Turks. Sympathised strongly with the Khilafat and Congress movements and participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement with his family in 1930-32. Evidence before Lee Commission 1924 memorable. Staunch nationalist throughout his life. Brother of Sir Ali Imam. Died 1933.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

Specially dealt with the Montague Chelmsford reforms proposals. The session of the Muslim League was also held at the same time under the Presidentship of Rajah of Mahmudabad and adopted resolutions similar to the Congress. Congress League scheme was reaffirmed. Montague scheme was declared to be disappointing and unsatisfactory and several modifications were

suggested. Demanded a declaration of rights of the people of India. Extra judicial penalties in respect of free speech and writing and right of association were condemned. Freedom of press was demanded. Simultaneous advance in both provinces and Government of India and fiscal autonomy as an inherent right of the Indian people was demanded. It was decided to send a deputation to England.

THIRTYFOURTH SESSION—Delhi 1918

President : PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA.

Chairman of the Reception Committee :

Hakim Ajmal Khan.

General Secretaries : V. J. Patel, Fazlul Huq and Pandit Gokaran Nath Misra

Delegates : 4861.

PRESIDENT

Born 1861. Started as journalist and edited the Indian Union 1885-1909. Took LL.B. and enrolled 1892. Member of the Provincial Legislative Council 1902-1912. President, U. P. Political Conference 1908. President, Indian National Congress, Lahore 1909 and Delhi 1918. Member, Imperial Legislative Council 1910-1919. Resigned as a protest against Rowlatt Act. Member Industrial Commission 1916-1918 and wrote minority report. Founder, Benares Hindu University and its Vice-Chancellor 1919-1939. Its Rector since 1939. Member, Central Legislative Assembly 1924-1930. Resigned as a protest against Imperial Preference Policy. Jailed twice during the Civil Disobedience Movement, 1930-1933. Delegate to the Second Round Table Conference 1931. President of the two banned sessions of the Congress in 1932 and 1933. Thrice President of the Hindu Mahasabha 1923, 1924 and 1936. Resigned from the Congress Parliamentary Board in 1934 due to differences on the question of the Communal Award and formed the Nationalist Party. Retired from politics due to old age. Died 1946.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

For the first time a thousand peasant delegates attended the Congress. Proceedings hitherto conducted in English were conducted in Hindusthani. Congress was becoming a mass organisation. Resolution demanded the repeal of all repressive laws. Demanded the fulfilment of the principle of self-determination in view of the pronouncements of President Wilson and Mr. Lloyd George and demanded representation at the Peace Conference by popularly elected representatives. Lokamanya Tilak, Gandhiji and Hasan Imam were nominated. Bombay resolutions on reforms were reaffirmed. Condemned Rowlatt Committee's recommendations. Asked for the release of Ali Brothers, detenus and political prisoners. Asked that India may be relieved of the burden of repaying 45 millions for war funds.



CHAPTER XVII

MUSLIM RENAISSANCE

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru



(The forces that had worked for a social and political renaissance in the country generally had acted in a slower and partly different manner on the Moslem intelligentsia. The following account of the process of reaction and renaissance among the Moslems is taken from Nehru's 'Discovery of India'.)

ONE would have expected that the new middleclass, which was the product of the impact from the West and of technological and economic changes, would have a common background in Hindu and Moslem alike. To some extent this was so, and yet differences arose which were not present, or were present in far lesser degree, in the feudal and semi-feudal classes and the masses. The Hindu and Moslem masses were hardly distinguishable from each other, the old aristocracy had developed common ways and standards. They yet followed a common culture and had common customs and festivals. The middleclasses began to diverge psychologically and later in other ways.

To begin with, the new middleclasses were almost absent among the Moslems. Their avoidance of Western education, their keeping away from trade and industry, and their adherence to feudal ways, gave a start to the Hindus, which they profited by and retained. British policy was inclined to be pro-Hindu and anti-Moslem, except in the Punjab where Moslem took more easily to Western education than elsewhere. But the Hindus had got a big start elsewhere long before the British took possession of the Punjab. Even in the Punjab, though conditions were more equal for the Hindu and Moslem, the Hindu had an economic advantage. Anti-foreign sentiment was shared alike by the Hindu and Moslem aristocracy and the masses. The Revolt of 1857 was a joint affair but in its suppression, Moslem felt strongly, and to some extent rightly, that they were the greater sufferers. This Revolt also put an end finally to any dreams or fantasies of the revival of the Delhi Empire. That Empire had vanished long ago even before the British arrived upon the scene. The Marathas had smashed it and controlled Delhi itself. Ranjit Singh ruled in the Punjab. Moghul rule had ended in the North without any intervention of the British, and in the South also it had disintegrated. Yet the shadow Emperor sat in the Delhi palace and though he had become a dependent and pensioner of the Marathas and the British successively, still he was a symbol of a famous dynasty. Inevitably, during the Revolt the rebels tried to take advantage of this symbol, inspite of his weakness and unwillingness. The ending of the Revolt meant also the smashing of the symbol.

As the people recovered slowly from the horror of the Mutiny days, there was a blank in their minds, a vacuum which sought for something to fill it. Of necessity, British rule had to be

accepted, but the break with the past had brought something more than a new government. It had brought doubt and confusion and a loss of faith in themselves. That break indeed had come long before the Mutiny and had led to the many movements of thought in Bengal and elsewhere to which I have already referred. But the Moslems generally had then retired into their shells far more than the Hindus, avoided Western education, and lived in day-dreams of a restoration of the old order. There could be no more dreaming now, but there had to be something to which they could cling on. They still kept away from the new education. Gradually and after much debate and difficulty, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan turned their minds towards English education and started the Aligarh College. That was the only avenue leading to government service and the lure of that service proved powerful enough to overcome old resentments and prejudices. The fact is that Hindus had gone far ahead in education. Likewise, Parsis and Hindus were also going ahead in industry but Moslem attention was directed to government service alone.

But even this new direction to their activities, which was really confined to comparatively few, did not resolve the doubt and confusion of their minds. Hindus, in like straits, had looked back and sought consolidation in ancient times. Old philosophy and literature, art and history brought some comfort. Ram Mohan Roy, Dayananda, Vivekananda and others had started new movements of thought. While they drank from the rich streams of English literature their minds were also full of ancient sages and heroes of India, their thoughts and deeds and the myths and traditions which they had imbibed from their childhood.

Much of this was common to the Moslem masses, who were well acquainted with these traditions. But it began to be felt, especially by the Moslem upper classes, that it was not quite proper for them to associate themselves with what would be against the spirit of Islam. They searched for their national roots elsewhere. To some extent they found them in the Afghan and Moghul periods of India. But this was not quite enough to fill the vacuum. Those periods were common for Hindus and Moslems alike and the sense of foreign intrusion had disappeared from Hindu minds. The Moghul rulers were looked upon as Indian national rulers, though in the case of Aurungzeb there was a difference of opinion. It is significant that Akbar, whom the Hindus especially admired, has not been approved of in recent years by some Moslems. Last year the 400th anniversary of his birth was celebrated in India; all classes of people, including many Moslems, joined but the Moslem League kept aloof because Akbar was a symbol of India's unity.

This search for cultural roots led Indian Moslems (that is some of them of the middleclass) to Islamic history and to the periods when Islam was a conquering and creative force in Beghdad, Spain, Constantinople, Central Asia and elsewhere. There had always been interest in this history and some contacts with neighbouring Islamic countries. There was also the Haj pilgrimage to Mecca which brought Moslems from various countries together. But all such contacts were limited and superficial and did not really affect the general outlook of Indian Moslems which was confined to India. The Afghan Kings of Delhi, especially Muhammad Tughlaq, had acknowledged the Khalifa (Caliph) at Cairo. The Ottoman Emperors at Constantinople subsequently became the Khalifas but they were not recognized as such in India. It was only after the complete collapse of the Moghul Power early in the Nineteenth century that the name of the Turkish Sultan began to be mentioned in Indian mosques. This practice was confirmed after the Mutiny.

Thus Indian Moslems sought to derive some psychological satisfaction from a contemplation of Islam's past greatness, chiefly in other countries, and in the fact of the continuance of Turkey as an independent Moslem Power, practically the only one left. This feeling was not opposed to or in conflict with Indian nationalism. Indeed many Hindus admired and were well acquainted with Islamic history. They sympathized with Turkey because they considered the Turks as Asiatic victims of European aggression. Yet the emphasis

was different and in their case that feeling did not supply a psychologicl need as it did in the case of the Moslems.

After the Mutiny the Indian Moslems had hesitated which way to turn. The British Government had deliberately repressed them to an even greater degree than it had repressed the Hindus, and this repression had especially affected those sections of the Moslem from which the new middleclass, the bourgeoisie, might have been drawn. They felt down and out and were intensely anti-British as well as conservative. British policy towards them underwent a gradual change in the seventies and became more favourable. This change was essentially due to the policy of balance and counterpoise which the British Government had consistently pursued. Still in this process, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan played an important part. He was convinced that he could only raise the Moslems through co-operation with the British authorities. He was anxious to make them accept English education and thus to draw them out of their conservative shells. He had been much impressed by what he had seen of European civilization and indeed some of his letters from Europe indicate that he was so dazed that he had rather lost his balance.

Sir Syed was an ardent reformer and he wanted to reconcile modern scientific thought with Islam. This was to be done of course not by attacking any basic belief, but by a rationalistic interpretation of scripture. He pointed out the basic similarities between Islam and Christianity. He attacked *purdah*, the seclusion of women, among the Moslems. He was opposed to any allegiance to the Turkish Khilafat. Above all, he was anxious to push a new type of education. The beginnings of the national movement frightened him for he thought that any opposition to the British authorities would deprive him of their help in his educational programme. That help appeared to him to be essential and so he tried to tone down anti-British sentiments among the Moslems and to turn them away from the National Congress which was taking shape then. One of the declared objects of the Aligarh College he founded was 'to make the Mussalmans of India worthy and useful subjects of the British Crown.' He was not opposed to the National Congress because he considered it predominantly a Hindu organization; he opposed it because he thought it was politically too aggressive (though it was mild enough in those days), and he wanted British help and co-operation. He tried to show that Moslems as a whole had not rebelled during the Mutiny and that many had remained loyal to the British Power. He was in no way anti-Hindu or communally separatist. Repeatedly he emphasized that religious differences should have no political or national significance. 'Do you not inhabit the same land', he said. 'Remember that the words Hindu and Muhomedan are only meant for religious distinction otherwise all persons, whether Hindu or Muhomedan, even the Christians who reside in this country are all in this particular respect belonging to one and the same nation'.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's influence was confined to certain sections of the upper classes among the Moslems; he did not touch the urban or rural masses. These masses were almost completely cut off from their upper classes and were far nearer to the Hindu masses. While some among the Moslem upper classes were descendants of the ruling groups during Moghul times, the masses had no such background or tradition. Most of them had been converted from the lowest strata of Hindu society and were most unhappily situated, being among the poorest and the most exploited.

Sir Syed had a number of able and notable colleagues. In his rationalistic approach he was supported, among others, by Syed Chairag Ali and Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk. His educational activities attracted Munshi Karamat Ali, Munshi Zakaullah of Delhi, Dr. Nazir Ahmad, Maulana Shibli Nomani, and the poet Hali, who is one of the outstanding figures of Urdu literature. Sir Syed succeeded in so far as the beginnings of English education among the Moslems were concerned and in diverting the Muslim mind from political movement. But in the early twentieth century the tendency towards nationalism and political activity became more noticeable among

the younger generation of Moslems. To divert this and provide a safe channel for it, the Moslem League was started in 1906 under the inspiration of the British Government and the leader of its chief supporters, the Aga Khan. The League had two principal objects: loyalty to the British Government and the safeguarding of Moslem interests.

It is worth noting that during the post-mutiny period all the leading men among Indian Moslems, including Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, were products of the old traditional education, although some of them added knowledge of English later and were influenced by new ideas. The new Western education had yet produced no notable figure among them. The leading poet in Urdu and one of the outstanding literary figures of the century in India was Ghalib, who was in his prime before the Mutiny.

In the early years of the twentieth century there were two trends among the Moslem intelligentsia: one, chiefly among the younger element, towards nationalism, the other was a diversion from India's past and even, to some extent, her present, and a greater interest in Islamic countries, especially in Turkey, the seat of the Khilafat.....

The Young Turk movement produced mixed reactions. It was looked upon with suspicion by most Moslems in India to begin with, and there was a general sympathy for the Sultan who was considered a bulwark against intrigues of European Powers in Turkey. But there were others, among them Abul Kalam Azad, who eagerly welcomed Young Turks and the promise of constitutional and social reform that they brought. When Italy suddenly attacked Turkey in the Tripoli War of 1911, and subsequently during the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913, an astonishing wave of sympathy for Turkey roused Indian Moslems. All Indians felt that sympathy and anxiety but in the case of Moslems this was keener and something almost personal. The last remaining Moslem Power was threatened with extinction; the sheet anchor of their faith in the future was being destroyed. Dr. M. A. Ansari led a strong medical mission to Turkey and even the poor subscribed; money came more rapidly than for any proposal for the uplift of the Indian Moslems themselves. World War I was a time of trial for the Moslems because Turkey was on the other side. They felt helpless and could do nothing. When the war ended their pent up feelings were to break out in the Khilafat movement.

The year 1912 was notable also in the development of the Moslem mind in India because of the appearance of two new weeklies—The Al-Hilal in Urdu and the Comrade in English. The Al-Hilal was started by Abul Kalam Azad, a brilliant youngman of 24 years, who had received his early education in Al Azhar University of Cairo and, while yet in his teens had become well-known for his Arabic and Persian scholarship, and deep learning. To this he added a knowledge of Islamic world outside India and of the reform movements that were coursing through it, as well as of European developments. Rationalist in outlook and yet profoundly versed in Islamic lore and history, he interpreted scripture from a rationalist point of view.

.....

Abul Kalam Azad spoke in a new language. He had himself seen nationalism growing in Turkey and other Islamic countries and he applied that knowledge to India and saw in the Indian national movement a similar development. Other moslems in India were hardly aware of these movements elsewhere and, wrapped up in their own feudal atmosphere had little appreciation of what was happening there. They thought in religious terms only and if they sympathised with Turkey it was chiefly because of that religious bond.....

Abul Kalam Azad spoke in a new language to them in his weekly Al-Hilal.....

The tradition of Aligarh College, however, was different and conservative, both politically and socially. Its trustees came from among the Princes and big landlords, typical representatives of the feudal order. Under a succession of English principals, closely associated with Government circles, it had fostered separatist tendencies and an anti-nationalist and anti-Congress outlook.

The chief aim kept before its students was to enter Government service in the sub-ordinate ranks. For that a pro-Government attitude was necessary and no truck with nationalism and sedition. The Aligarh College group had become the leaders of the new Moslem intelligentsia and influenced sometimes openly, more often from behind the scenes, almost every Moslem movement. The Moslem League came into existence largely through their efforts.

Abul Kalam Azad attacked this stronghold of conservatism and anti-nationalism, not directly but by spreading ideas which undermined the Aligarh tradition. This very youthful writer and journalist created a sensation in Moslem intellectual circles, and though the elders frowned upon him, his words created a ferment in the minds of the younger generation. That ferment had already started because of events in Turkey, Egypt and Iran, as well as the developments of the Indian nationalist movement. Azad gave a definite trend to it by pointing out that there was no conflict between Islam and sympathy for Islamic countries and Indian nationalism. This helped in bringing the Moslem League nearer to the Congress. Azad had himself joined the League, whilst yet a boy, at its first session in 1906.

The Al-Hilal.....press was confiscated in 1914.....Al-Balagh ended in 1916 when Azad was interned by the British Government. For nearly four years he was kept in internment and when he came out at last, he took his place immediately among the leaders of the National Congress.....

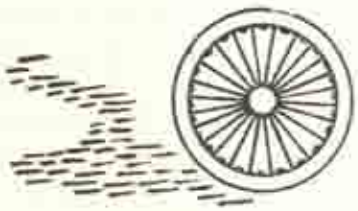
The other weekly that was started in 1912,..... was the Comrade.....in English,.....edited by Maulana Mohamad Ali, who was an odd mixture of Islamic tradition and Oxford education. He began as an adherent of the Aligarh tradition and was opposed to any aggressive politics. But he was far too able and dynamic a personality to remain confined in that static framework Progressivly he grew more anti-British and the entry of Turkey in World War I completed the process. A famous and enormously long article of his in the Comrade entitled 'The Choice of The Turks' put an end to the Comrade which was stopped by the Government. Soon after, Government arrested him and his brother Shaukat Ali and interned them for the duration of the War and a year after. They were released at the end of 1919 and both immediately joined the National Congress. The Ali brothers played a very prominent part in the Khilafat agitation and in the Congress politics in the early twenties and suffered imprisonment for it.

The change that took place in Mohamad Ali was symbolic of the changing mentality of the Indian Moslems. Even the Moslem League, founded to isolate the Moslems from nationalist currents and completely controlled by reactionary and semi-feudal elements, was forced to recognise the pressure from the younger generation. It was drifting, though somewhat unwillingly, with the tide of nationalism and coming nearer to the Congress. In 1913, it changed its creed of loyalty to Government to a demand for self-government for India. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had advocated this change in his forceful writings in The Al-Hilal.



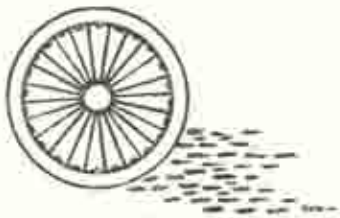
BOOK IV

NON-CO-OPERATION ERA



CHAPTER XVIII

WAR YEARS AND THE PUNJAB ATROCITIES



IN July 1914, the Great War broke out. The old leaders of the Congress were at this time losing hold on popular support. Gokhale died in 1915, followed by Sir Ferozeshah Mehta in the same year. Wacha had become infirm. Surendra Nath Banerjee was a spent force. Lala Lajpat Rai was an exile in America. A remarkable new personality, Mrs. Besant who was already a world figure, a social rebel, and friend of the poor everywhere and known for her love for India, had come as a new factor in Indian politics.

Lokmanya Tilak had returned after a long imprisonment from Mandalay.

Gandhiji had just returned from South Africa as a minor celebrity, going about the country, studying things under the direction of his 'political guru' Gokhale. In the Bombay Congress in 1915 Gandhiji could not be elected to the Subjects Committee.

Lokmanya and Mrs. Besant had tried for a Union between the moderates and extremists to use the Congress machine for a Self-Government goal. This did not come about in 1915 and Lokmanya started a Home Rule League at Poona. He was truly the idol of the people but the Government knew him to be their implacable enemy and continuously prosecuted him. He was sixty years and the rigours of long jail had left him unfit to take up the tours and meetings in the country which would have made him the uncrowned king, not only of Maharashtra, but of all India. Mrs. Besant suffered from no such disabilities. She also started another Home Rule for India League, with headquarters in Madras.

In 1916, the Congress League pourpariers had come to a successful issue. The A. I. C. C. discussion in 1916 were held at the residence of a less well-known moderate leader—Pt. Motilal Nehru.

Lokmanya joined the Lucknow Congress in 1916 for the first time after Surat, along with a large number of his party as delegates.

The Lucknow session was a unique one for a union between the Congress and the League and between moderates and extremists and for the formulation of the scheme of Self-Government. The session was attended by such moderates as Surendra Nath Banerjee and Rash Behari Ghosh,

by Mrs. Besant with her two lieutenants Arundale and Wadia with the banner of Home Rule in their hands and such muslim leaders as the Raja of Mahmudabad, Mazar-ul-Haq and young Jinnah. Gandhi and Polak were there too.

Some people from Champaran had come to invite Gandhi there. A resolution was passed by the Congress on the Champaran planters.

The Congress League scheme was passed and a declaration and promise for 'Dominion Status' self rule for India was prayed for.

It may be noticed that among the resolutions passed at Lucknow, one was against the Defence of India Act and the Bengal Regulation Act. III of 1818. This was an echo of the happenings outside in the country.

In 1917, the Home Rule agitation was carried by a vigorous campaign by Mrs. Besant, throughout the country, Mrs. Besant and her companions were interned. Mr. Jinnah at this time joined the Home Rule. The internment made Mrs. Besant and her agitation very popular. A plan for passive resistance movement for the release of the internees had been set on foot.

The popular awakening was in fact a product of the gigantic world forces released by the war.

A large number of Indians had gone abroad as soldiers and given a marvellous account of themselves in France, Flanders and other theatres of war. The myth of the superiority of the Western powers and the English was disappearing. Tremendous changes were taking place in the world set-up. Tsarist Russia had fallen and strange stories of a peoples' or workers' government taking its place, were finding an echo everywhere. In India a small band of revolutionaries had been carrying on a lonely but thrilling battle against foreign rule. The Irish movement was another source of excitement and inspiration. The activity of the Ghaddar party and the Bengal and Punjab revolutionaries at this time is narrated elsewhere in this book. There were also other factors of a rather explosive situation. The war conditions, inflation and the demands on the people, enforced often by high pressure methods, as in O'Dwyer's Punjab, for recruits and the sinews of war, were creating bitter anti-government feelings. The hitherto, isolated muslims were even more dissatisfied on account of Turkey being on the other side of the allies.

This was the time when the notable figures among the muslims, Iqbal, Shibli and Azad gave expression to a feeling of discontent of the muslims. 'Al-Hilal' of Maulana Azad, Zafar Ali's 'Zamindar', 'Comrade' and 'Hamdard' of Mohamad Ali were publishing a radical new outlook on religion and politics. This trend had brought the Muslim League in line with the Congress in 1916.

The Government was not unmindful of these dangerous new forces. Special legislation was passed and the more radical leaders were jailed and interned. The Ali Brothers and Azad were put in internment and other people suspected of association with the revolutionary movement were prosecuted. Also the Government tried to win over the moderate elements. Government also hastened to issue a declaration in which Mr. Montague, the Secretary of State, proclaimed the aims of British rule in India to be "the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to progressive realisation of Responsible Government in India as an integral part of the British Empire". Mr. Montague came to India intent on "rallying the moderates" to the "Montague-Chelmsford Reforms".

Mrs. Besant and her associates were released. There was a joint meeting of the League and Congress executives at Allahabad on October 6th and the Passive Resistance scheme was dropped. Instead, a committee of twelve with Mr. C. Y. Chintamani was appointed to go on deputation to the Secretary of State and the Viceroy, to enlist support for the Congress-League scheme.

Mr. Montague made a tour of India and saw all shades of politicians. There was a division of opinion about the new constitutional scheme,

In the 1917 session of the Congress at Calcutta, Mrs. Besant was elected president in face of moderate opposition. The Calcutta Congress supported the Congress League scheme and demanded responsible government, "the full measure to be attained within a time limit to be fixed in the statute itself at an early date". The tri-colour national flag was adopted in this session which was hitherto the flag of the Home Rule League. Another resolution in Calcutta had condemned the appointment of the Rowlatt Committee and the extensive use of Defence of India Act and Regulation III of 1818. Mrs. Besant was the first Congress president who acted upon the rule that the President of the year's session was president for the whole year and she carried on an incessant activity on educative and propagandist work in India and England. Meanwhile the Defence of India Act was vigorously at work everywhere.

In 1917 Gandhiji was busy at Champaran and had advised his associates including Rajendra Babu that the real fight for Swaraj was being fought in the villages there. Later he joined the Viceroy's War council. Lokmanya Tilak was also engaged in recruiting work, though the Government distrusted him. In August 1918 Lokmanya Tilak had sent a cheque for Rs. 50,000 to Gandhiji, the sum to be forfeited if Tilak failed to recruit 5000 Maharashtrians for the war—if Gandhi secured a promise from the Government that Indians would get Commissioned rank in the army.

The Montague-Chelmsford Report was published in June 1918. It created acute differences of opinion among Congressmen. A special session met at Bombay in August 1918. The Reforms were estimated as unsatisfactory and the demand for the Congress League scheme was reiterated. But various complicating views were reconciled and majority of Congressmen remained united. The prominent moderate leaders, however, had not attened the Bombay session and later formed themselves into a new—"The Liberal" party.

The Muslim League had also held its session at Bombay and taken decision similar to the Congress decisions.

In the critical closing year of the war, the repressive policy of the Government was becoming worse and worse. The Press Act was severely enforced. There were restrictions on Tilak and Besant. In Bengal the number of youngmen interned ran upto nearly three thousand. There was great hardship and discontent, specially in the Punjab on account of recruiting and war fund activities of the Government. The Rowlatt Committee had issued its report and recommendations. The Congress after Bombay was to meet at Delhi. Lokmanya was elected the President but as he was engaged in work at London in his litigation with Sir Valentine Chirol, he expressed his inability to preside and Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya was elected instead.

The war had come to a close already when the Congress met at Delhi. The allies had been successful and the principle of Self-determination had been declared by President Wilson, Lloyd George and other Statesmen. In light of this situation the Delhi Congress re-examined the position with regard to the Montague-Chelmsford scheme, demanding 'Dominion Status' and representation on Peace Conference, and nominating Lokmanya, Gandhiji and Hussan Imam as its representatives. The Congress also urged the withdrawal of all repressive laws.

But the demand of Delhi Congress were not only unheeded but as 1919 showed—the Government having won the war, felt itself free now, to deal with the agitation and rebellion in India, in its own way. The Rowlatt Bills were introduced in February 1919 in the Supreme Legislative Council.

It was at this time that Gandhiji entered the field of Indian politics actively.

He notified his intention of meeting the situation with a campaign of Satyagrah if the Rowlatt recommendations were enacted. At once he began on the tours of the whole country which have not ceased even to-day. He was received with great enthusiasm everywhere.

On the 18th of March he published the pledge:

"Being conscientiously of opinion that the Bill known as the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Bill, No. 1 of 1919, and the Criminal Law Emergency Powers Bill, No. 2 of 1919, are unjust, subversive of the principles of liberty and justice and destructive of the elementary rights of an individual on which the safety of India as a whole and the State itself is based, we solemnly affirm that in the event of these Bills becoming Law and until they are withdrawn, we shall refuse civilly to obey these laws and such other laws as the Committee, hereafter to be appointed, may think fit, and we further affirm that in the struggle we will faithfully follow truth and refrain from violence to life, person or property." The 30th of March 1919 was fixed for a hartal, a day of fasting, penance and prayer, but was changed to 6th April.

6th April, 919, is a red letter day in Indian history. The response of the people startled the Government as well as the leaders. The Government flushed with victory lost its head. There was firing at places. At Delhi, Swami Shradhananda when threatened with shooting by British soldiers bared his chest for the bullets. There were glorious scenes of Hindu Muslim fraternisation. Swami Shradhananda was allowed to preach from the pulpit of Jumma Masjid. The country took to this new idea, as if they had been waiting for it, all along. A new chapter in the national struggle had begun. The happenings in the Punjab soon provided the immediate source of a deep and torrential flood of national awakening that has not been exhausted ever since.

The story of the Punjab is too well known and remembered to be repeated in any detail. The Punjab has been the citadel of British Imperialism, recruiting ground of the army of occupation; and reaction and ruthlessness has distinguished the Punjab Government policy ever since the beginning upto the last days of British departure. The legacy of that policy still overclouds our outlook and the situation in the Punjab is still the tragedy and menace of our country.

In 1919, the Punjab was ruled by a more forthright imperialist in the person of Sir Michael O'Dwyer who was determined to save the Punjab from contamination of political agitation elsewhere.

The Congress was to be held in Amritsar in 1919 and Sir Michael O'Dwyer sent for the local Congress leaders, Dr Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal to his house and they were spirited away to unknown places. This was on the 10th April, 1919. Crowds of people gathered and wanted to meet the District Magistrate to ask the whereabout of these popular leaders. There was firing and brickbats and the casualties made the people very excited and the mob killed five Englishmen and burnt a bank and some other buildings

There were similar incidents at Gujeranwalla and Kasur and minor outbreaks elsewhere. Martial-law was declared in the Punjab the same day.

It is not our purpose to recall the incidents of humiliation and horror of the martial-law regime in the Punjab or even of Jalianwala Bagh to-day, excepting very briefly.

The unarmed crowd trapped in the walled square at Jalianwala Bagh was shot down till ammunition was exhausted. On Government admission 379 were killed and 1200 left wounded on the spot without any aid.

The Punjab atrocities were described by Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer, an ultra moderate jurist as follows:

"The wholesale slaughter of hundreds of unarmed men at Jalianwala Bagh without giving the crowd an opportunity to disperse, the indifference of General Dyer to the condition of hundreds of people who were wounded in the firing, the firing of machine guns into crowds who had dispersed and taken to their heels, the flogging of men in public, the order compelling thousands of students to walk 16 miles a day for roll calls, the arrest and detention of 500 students and professors, the compelling of school children of 5 to 7 to

attend on parade to salute the flag, the order imposing on owners of property the responsibility for the safety of the martial law posters stuck on their property, the flogging of a marriage party, the censorship of mails, the closure of the Badshahi mosque for six weeks, the arrest and detention of people without any substantial reason and especially of people who had tendered services to the state in connection with the war fund or otherwise, the flogging of six of the biggest boys in Islamiah School simply because they happened to be school boys and big boys, the construction of an open cage for the confinement of arrested persons, the invention of novel punishments like the crawling order, the skipping order and others unknown to any system of law, civil or military, the handcuffing and roping together of persons and keeping them in open trucks for fifteen hours, the use of Aeroplanes and Lewis guns and the latest paraphernalia of scientific warfare against unarmed citizens, the taking of hostages and the confiscation and destruction of property for the purpose of securing the attendance of absentees, the handcuffing of Hindus and Mohammedans in pairs with the object of demostrating the consequence of Hindu-Muslim unity, the cutting off of electric and water supply pipes from Indians' houses, the removal of fans from Indian houses and giving them for use by Europeans, the commandeering of all vehicles owned by Indians and giving them to Europeans for use, the feverish disposal of cases with the object of forestalling the termination of martial law, are some of the many incidents of the administration of martial law, which created a reign of terror in the Punjab and have shocked the public".

The news of events in the Punjab, suppressed at first soon sent a wave of horror and fury throughout the length and breadth of the country. It changed into bitter determination as days passed by and the attitude of the Government with regard to the Punjab atrocities came to be realised.

For eight months the Government tried to draw a veil over the Punjab massacre. After the Congress had conducted and published an enquiry into the facts by a committee consisting of Gandhiji, Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das, Abbas Tyabji and Jaykar, and in face of widespread agitation the Government set up a committee under Lord Hunter. Inspite of the ugliest findings, this committee tried to whitewash and justify the perpetrators of the crimes with mild regret. The House of Commons did not fail to glorify the butcher Dyer and public subscriptions were raised by English women and men in England to honour this hero. The real face of imperialism was unmasked for all Indians to see, and has never been effaced from our memory ever since.

THE DREAM OF A DAWN

You have assembled here in deep mourning over the cruel murder of hundreds of your brothers and in electing your president you have assigned to him the position of chief mourner. That position I accept in all reverence We must aim at an India where all are free and have the fullest opportunities of development; where women have ceased to be in bondage and the rigours of the caste system have disappeared; where there are no privileged classes or communities; where education is free and open to all; where the capitalist and the landlord do not oppress the labourer or the ryot; where labour is respected and well-paid; and poverty, the nightmare of the present generation, is a thing of the past. Life will then be worth living in this country, it will be inspired by joy and hope and the terrible misery we see around us will become a bad dream which has faded away from our memory on our awakening to welcome the morning sun.

PT. MOTILAL NEHRU

(Presidential address at Amritsar Congress, 1919)

THE PLEDGE WE TOOK

With God as Witness, I solemnly declare that,

(1) I wish to be a member of the National Volunteer Corps.

(2) So long as I remain a member of the Corps, I shall remain non-violent in word and deed and shall earnestly endeavour to be non-violent in intent, since I believe that, as India circumstanced, non-violence alone can help the Khilafat and the Punjab and result in the attainment of Swaraj and consolidation of unity among all the races and communities of India whether Hindu, Musalman, Sikh, Parsi, Christian or Jew.

(3) I believe in and shall endeavour always to promote such unity.

(4) I believe in Swadeshi as essential for India's economic, political and moral salvation, and shall use hand-spun and hand-woven Khaddar to the exclusion of every other cloth.

(5) As a Hindu I believe in the justice and necessity of removing the evil of untouchability and shall, on all possible occasions, seek personal contact with and endeavour to render service to the submerged classes.

(6) I shall carry out the instructions of my superior officers and all the regulations, not inconsistent with the spirit of this pledge, prescribed by the Volunteer Board or the Working Committee or any other agency established by the Congress.

(7) I am prepared to suffer imprisonment, assault or even death for the sake of my religion and my country without resentment.

(8) In the event of my imprisonment I shall not claim from the Congress any support for my family or dependents.



CHAPTER XIX

COMING OF GANDHIJI

THE CONGRESS BECOMES A DYNAMIC ORGANIZATION UNDER GANDHIJI'S LEADERSHIP

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru.

GANDHI for the first time entered the Congress organization and immediately brought about a complete change in its constitution. He made it democratic and a mass organization. Democratic it had been previously also but it had so far been limited in franchise and restricted to the upper classes. Now the peasants rolled in and, in its new garb, it began to assume the look of a vast agrarian organization with a strong sprinkling of the middle-classes. This agrarian character was to grow. Industrial workers also came in but as individuals and not in their separate organized capacity.



Action was to be the basis and objective of this organization, action based on peaceful methods. Thus far the alternatives had been: just talking and passing resolutions, or terroristic activity. Both of these were set aside and terrorism was especially condemned as opposed to the basic policy of the Congress. A new technique of action was evolved which, though perfectly peaceful, yet involved nonsubmission to what was considered wrong and, as a consequence, a willing acceptance of the pain and suffering involved in this. Gandhi was an odd kind of pacifist for he was an activist full of dynamic energy. There was no submission in him to fate or anything that he considered evil; he was full of resistance though this was peaceful and courteous.

The call of action was two-fold. There was of course the action involved in challenging and resisting foreign rule; there was also the action which led us to fight our own social evils. Apart from the fundamental objective of the Congress—the freedom of India—and the method of peaceful action, the principal planks of the Congress were national unity, which involved the solution of the minority problems, and the raising of the depressed classes and the ending of the curse of the untouchability.

Realizing that the main props of British rule were fear, prestige, the co-operation, willing or unwilling, of the people, and certain classes whose vested interests were centred in British rule, Gandhi attacked these foundations. Titles were to be given up and though the title-holders responded to this only in small measure, the popular respect for these British-given titles disappeared and they became symbols of degradation. New standards and values were set up and the pomp and splendour of the Viceregal court and the Princes, which used to impress so much, suddenly appeared supremely ridiculous and vulgar and rather shameful, surrounded as they were by the poverty and misery of the people. Rich men were not so anxious to flaunt their riches; outwardly at least many of them adopted simpler ways and, in their dress, became almost indistinguishable from humbler folk.

The older leaders of the Congress, nurtured in a different and more quiescent tradition, did not take easily to these new ways and were disturbed by the upsurge of the masses. Yet so powerful was the wave of feeling and sentiment that swept through the country, that some of that intoxication filled them also. A very

few fell away and among them was Mr. M. A. Jinnah. He left the Congress not because of any difference of opinion on the Hindu-Moslem question but because he could not adapt himself to the new and more advanced ideology, and even more so because he disliked the crowds of ill-dressed people, talking in Hindusthani, who filled the Congress. His idea of politics was of superior variety, more suited to the legislative chamber or to a committee room. For some years he felt completely out of the picture and even decided to leave India for good. He settled down in England and spent several years there.

It is said, and I think with truth, that the Indian habit of mind is essentially one of quietism. Perhaps old races develop that attitude to life; a long tradition of philosophy also leads to it. And yet Gandhi, a typical product of India, represents the very antithesis of quietism: He has been a demon of energy and action, a hustler, and a man who not only drives himself but drives others. He has done more than any one I know to fight and change the quietism of the Indian people.

He sent us to the villages, and the countryside hummed with the activity of innumerable messengers of the new gospel of action. The peasant was shaken up and he began to emerge from his quiescent shell. The effect on us was different but equally far-reaching, for we saw, for the first time as it were, the villager in the intimacy of his mud-hut and with the stark shadow of hunger always pursuing him. We learnt our Indian economics more from these visits than from books and learned discourses. The emotional experience we had already undergone was emphasized and confirmed and henceforward there could be no going back for us to our old life or our old standards, howsoever much our views might change subsequently.

Gandhi held strong views on economic, social and other matters. He did not try to impose all of these on the Congress, though he continued to develop his ideas, and sometimes in the process varied them, through his writings. But some he tried to push into the Congress. He proceeded cautiously for he wanted to carry the people with him. Sometimes he went too far ahead of the Congress and had to retrace his steps. Not many accepted his views in their entirety, some disagreed with that fundamental outlook. But many accepted them in the modified form they came to the Congress as being suited to the circumstances then existing. In two respects the background of his thought had a vague but considerable influence, the fundamental test of everything was how far it benefited the masses, and the means were always important and could not be ignored even though the end in view was right, for the means governed the end and varied it.

Gandhi was essentially a man of religion, a Hindu to the innermost depths of his being, and yet his conception of religion had nothing to do with any dogma or custom or ritual. It was basically concerned with his firm belief in the moral law, which he calls the Law of Truth or Love. 'Truth and non-violence appear to him to be the same thing or different aspects of one and the same thing, and he uses these words almost interchangeably. Claiming to understand the spirit of Hinduism, he rejects every text or practice which does not fit in with his idealist interpretation of what it should be, calling it an interpolation or a subsequent accretion. 'I decline to be a slave', he has said 'to precedents or practice I cannot understand or defend on a moral basis.' And so in practice he is singularly free to take the path of his choice, to change and adapt himself, to develop his philosophy of life and action, subject only to the overriding consideration of the moral law as he conceives this to be. Whether that philosophy is right or wrong may be argued, but he insists on applying the same fundamental yard-stick to everything, and himself specially. In politics, as in other aspects of life, this creates difficulties for the average person, and often misunderstanding. But no difficulty makes him swerve from the straight line of his choosing, though within limits he is continually adapting himself to a changing situation. Every reform that he suggests, every advice that he gives to others, he straightway applies to himself. He is always beginning with himself and his words and actions fit into each other like a glove on the hand. And so, whatever happens, he never loses his integrity and there is always an organic completeness about his life and work. Even in his apparent failures he has seemed to grow in stature.

What was his idea of India which he was setting out to mould according to his own wishes and ideals? 'I shall work for an India in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country, in whose making they have an effective voice, and India in which there shall be no high class and low class of people, an

India in which all communities shall live in perfect harmony There can be no room in such an India for the curse of untouchability or the curse of intoxicating drinks and drugs . . . Women will enjoy the same rights as men . . . This is the India of my dreams.' Proud of his Hindu inheritance as he was, he tried to give Hinduism a kind of universal attire and included all religions within the fold of truth. He refused to narrow his cultural inheritance. 'Indian culture,' he wrote 'is neither Hindu, Islamic nor any other, wholly. It is a fusion of all.' Again he said: 'I want the culture of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any. I refuse to live in other peoples' houses as an interloper, a beggar or a slave'. Influenced by modern thought currents, he never let go of his roots and clung to them tenaciously.

And so he set about to restore the spiritual unity of the people and to break the barrier between the small Westernized group at the top and the masses, to discover the living elements in the old roots and to build them, to waken these masses out of their stupor and static condition and make them dynamic. In his single-track and yet many-sided nature the dominating impression that one gathered was his identification with the masses, a community of spirit with them, an amazing sense of unity with the dispossessed and poverty-stricken not only of India but of the world. Even religion, as everything else, took second place to his passion to raise these submerged people. 'A semi-starved nation can have neither religion nor art nor organization.' 'Whatever can be useful to starving millions is beautiful to my mind. Let us give today first the vital things of life, and all the graces and ornaments of life will follow I want art and literature that can speak to millions'. These unhappy dispossessed millions haunted him and everything seemed to revolve round them. 'For millions it is an eternal vigil or an eternal trance.' His ambition, he said, was 'to wipe every tear from every eye.'

It is not surprising that this astonishingly vital man, full of self-confidence and an unusual kind of power, standing for equality and freedom for each individual, but measuring all this in terms of the poorest, fascinated the masses of India and attracted them like a magnet. He seemed to them to link up the past with the future and to make the dismal present appear just as a stepping stone to that future of life and hope. And not the masses only but intellectuals and others also, though their minds were often troubled and confused and the change-over for them from the habits of a lifetime was more difficult. Thus he effected a vast psychological revolution not only among those who followed his lead but also among his opponents and those many neutrals who could not make up their minds what to think and what to do.

Congress was dominated by Gandhi and yet it was a peculiar domination, for the Congress was an active, rebellious, many sided organization, full of variety of opinion, and not easily led this way or that. Often Gandhi toned down his position to meet the wishes of others, sometimes he accepted even an adverse decision. On some vital matters for him, he was adamant, and on more than one occasion there came a break between him and the Congress. But always he was the symbol of India's independence and militant nationalism, the unyielding opponent of all those who sought to enslave her, and it was as such a symbol that people gathered to him and accepted his lead, even though they disagreed with him on other matters. They did not always accept that lead when there was no active struggle going on, but when the struggle was inevitable that symbol became all important, and everything else was secondary.

Thus in 1920 the National Congress, and to a large extent the country, took to his new and unexplored path and came into conflict repeatedly with the British Power. That conflict was inherent both in these methods and the new situation that had arise, yet back of all this was not political tactics and manoeuvering but the desire to strengthen the Indian people, for by that strength alone could they achieve independence and retain it. Civil disobedience struggles came one after the other, involving enormous suffering, but that suffering was self-invited and therefore strength-giving, not the kind which overwhelms the unwilling, leading to despair and defeatism. The unwilling also suffered, caught in the wide net of fierce governmental repression, and even the willing sometimes broke up and collapsed. But many remained true and steadfast, harder for all the experience they had undergone. At no time, even when its fortunes were low, did Congress surrender to superior might or submit to foreign authority. It remained the symbol of India's passionate desire for independence and her will to

resist alien domination. It was because of this that vast numbers of the Indian people sympathized with it and looked to it for leadership, even though many of them were too weak and feeble, or so circumstanced as to be unable to do anything themselves. The Congress was a party in some ways; it has also been a joint platform for several parties; but essentially it was something much more, for it represented the innermost desire of vast numbers of our people. The number of members on its rolls, large as this was, was only a feeble reflection of this widespread representative character, for membership depend not on the people's desire to join but on our capacity to reach remote villages. Often (as now) we have been an illegal organization, not existing at all in the eyes of the law, and our books and papers have been taken away by the police.

Even when there was no civil disobedience struggle going on, the general attitude of non-co-operation with the British apparatus of government in India continued, though it lost its aggressive character. That did not mean, of course, non-co-operation with Englishmen as such. When Congress Governments were installed in many provinces, there was inevitably much co-operation in official and governmental work. Even then, however, that background did not change much and instructions were issued regulating the conduct of Congressmen, apart from official duties. Between Indian nationalism and an alien imperialism there could be no final peace, though temporary compromises and adjustments were sometimes inevitable. Only a free India could co-operate with England on equal terms.[1]

[1] Discovery of India by Nehru.

BIHAR: LABORATORY OF MAHATMA GANDHI

Shri Rajendra Prasad Sinha.

To Bihar, of all the provinces in India, belongs the honour of having served as a laboratory to Mahatma Gandhi for his various experiments which were lately to find their application in the different phases of his campaign for national regeneration of the country. It was here that the potentiality of his weapons of Satyagraha which had been but lately forged in South Africa and proved efficacious in the freedom's fight there, was first put to test under Indian conditions. It is again interesting to recall that the village-to-village march upon which Mahatmajee embarked upon again and again, was first tried out in Bihar. It was here, again in the land of Bihar that the Wardha Scheme of Basic Education, which is regarded as the sheet-anchor of the educational reconstruction of India and which is among the greatest of Mahatmajee's constructive contributions was ushered into existence in an embroynic state, long long before anybody thought of Wardha or of Basic Education.

II

The 10th day of April of the year 1917 will be marked as a red letter day in the annals of Bihar for it was on that day that the architect of India's destiny set foot upon the soil of the province in response to the call of submerged humanity. The European planters considered to be the powers behind the throne, from whose oppression he came to release the dumb driven millions of Champaran, rallied in a solid phalanx to obstruct and oppose him. The Statesman, the Englishman and the Pioneer the powerful organs of the Anglo-Indian interests, opened their broadsides upon him. The eyes of the whole of India were raised towards Bihar, where the first round of the struggle for India's freedom had started, for it soon became manifest that the fight for emancipation of the tenantry of Champaran meant battling not only against the European planters but also the white bureaucracy of the land which was ranged solidly behind the former. Acting under the instructions of the Commissioner of the Tirhut Division, the District Magistrate of Champaran ordered Mahatmajee to leave the district at once. How could the saviour respect this fiat by giving up his mission? He was hauled up in court for defiance of orders. In the course of his statement to the court he said, "As a law-abiding citizen my first instinct would be as it was, to obey the order served upon me. But I could not do so without doing violence to my sense of duty to those for whom I came. I feel that I could just now serve them by remaining in their midst. I could not therefore voluntarily retire. Amidst this conflict of duty I could only throw the responsibility of removing me from them on the administration". Herein lies

the quintessence of Satyagrah, the sovereign weapon which subsequently came to be used with a decisive force in the larger struggle for Indian Independence.

III

It is remarkable that in the field of Champaran not only the theory and practice of Satyagrah came to be associated for the first time with the fight for freedom in India but also that the entire strategy of the fight was evolved. What was to be done if Gandhijee was arrested? That was the question of questions. A number of suggestions were made. But again Mahatmajee's own method as he had practised in South Africa was considered to be the most suitable. It was decided that in case Mahatmajee went to jail, Moulana Mazharul Haque and Babu Brajkishor Prasad would take the lead. If they were removed, Babu Dharnidhar and Babu Ram Navami Prasad would take charge of the work. If they too were picked up, Babu (now Hon'ble Dr.) Rajendra Prasad, Babu Shambhu Saran and Babu (now Hon'ble) Anugrah Narayan Singh were to fill the gap. It is needless to mention that this technique was adopted all over the country in all the different stages of the fight for freedom.

IV

As Mahatmajee went about from village to village in Noakhali preaching love and inspiring faith and confidence he reminded the people of Bihar of his visits to the remote villages in the heart of Champaran. On the 16th April 1916 Mahatmajee started for the village of Jasaulipatti. It was the month of Baisakh ; the sun was hot and there was strong westerly wind, and one got almost scorched in the open. By 12 o'clock noon the party had travelled about 9 miles from Motihari and reached a village called Chandradiha. Mahatmajee desired to see the condition of the village. On enquiry it was ascertained that it was one of the villages of the Motihari Factory and the majority of its residents were labourers, who had all gone to the Factory for work. They however, met a man who explained to them the conditions of the village and boasted that even the Collector of the district dared not do any thing against the Sahib, the Manager of the Factory. On the 24th April Mahatmajee went to a village called Laukuria and enquired about the grievances of the labourers regarding the wages paid by the Factory. He met Mr. Gale, the Manager of the Bytcah Factory. While he was returning a factory servant came running to him and said, "I was apprehending that the Factory Manager might behave rudely towards you ; I was therefore over-hearing the whole conversation from a concealed corner, ready to come to your assistance, come what might to me, in case anything untoward happened to you". On the 26th April Mahatmajee went to see a village, Singha Chapra under the Kuria factory. He was grievously hurt to find indigo grown all round the houses of the tenants. Next day, Mahatmajee and the party started on foot from the Narkatiaganj Railway Station for Murli Bharwa which is at a distance of 6 or 7 miles from there. In spite of the hot sun of the month of Baisakh they managed to reach the village at 10 o'clock. Mahatmajee inspected a house which it was stated had been looted by the Factory people only a month before. The frame-work of the house was standing in a disturbed condition. The earthen Kothis in which grains were kept were lying upset and trunks of the plantain trees of the grove lay uprooted. On the fields, which were grazed by cattle under orders of the Factory as stated, were still standing the stalks and stems of the crop which had been so destroyed. Thus Mahatmajee went from village to village regardless of opposition and the inclemencies of the hot-weather sun and wind, until his labours were crowned with success.

V

The Wardha System of Basic Education which promises to be the bed-rock of educational reconstruction in the country had its genesis in Champaran movement. Mahatmajee felt that his efforts for the uplift of the masses could not have enduring results unless an urge was created within them. For this, it was necessary to educate them. On the 13th of November, 1917 Mahatma Gandhi opened his first school at Barharwa Lakhansen, a village at a distance of about 20 miles to the east of Motihari. The school was put in charge of Srijut Bal Gokhale, his cultured wife Srimati Awantika Bai Gokhale and Mahatmaji's youngest son, Srijut Devadas Gandhi. The former two brought to bear upon their work their high education and experience of European countries, while the latter, combined with his zeal for service, his experience of South African Satyagrah. Another school was opened by Mahatmajee on the 20th of November

in a village called Bhitihurwa. This village is situated in the Neapl-tarai about forty miles north west of Bettiah. Srijut Sadasiva Lakshman Soman, an advocate of Belgaon, an enthusiastic youngman from Gujrat, Srijut B. V. Purohit Srimati Kasturi Bai Gandhi (of revered memory) began to live there. A third school was opened on the 17th of January, 1918 at Mudhuban, which had among its teachers, Srijut Mahadeva Desai (of respected and cherished memory) his wife Srimati Durga Bai, Srimati Anand Bai, Srijut Narahari Dwarkadas Parekh. Acharya Kripalani also worked there. It is worth mentioning that the Satyagrah of Champaran was responsible for initiation in the service of the motherland of two volunteers who were destined to be among the topmost generals in the India's fight for independence to wit Acharya Kripalani and Deshratna Dr. Rajendra Prasad. While Bihar's indebtedness to Mahatma Gandhi is irritrievable not only for having saccoured her millions from the tentacles of white planters but also for having breathed into her soul the new message. She had tried to repay a part of the debt by giving to Gandhiji the ablest of her sons of the present age, who has come to be regarded as the alter ego of the Mahatma himself.

EARLY SATYAGRAHA EXPERIMENTS IN GUJRAT

Shri G. V. Mavlankar

Till the advent of Gandhiji into the political arena in India, the Indian nationalists visualised only two courses of action for achieveing the political progress of India towards self-government. One, that was adopted by the Liberals, and more or less by the so-called extremists also, was to pass resolutions, petitioning, criticising or condemning Government, as also to agitate and focus public opinion. The other adopted by the younger section styled "Revolutionary" was a resort to the bomb and other methods of violence. The former was ineffective and the latter was possible only for a few and difficult of practice on a large scale, on account of the immense potentiality of Government for counter-violence and repression, as was evidenced by the Jallianwalabagh incident and Government policy. The young mind of the country was surging with discontent accompanied by a feeling of disappointment and frustration.

2. Gandhiji had tried successfully in South Africa his method of direct action first called "passive resistence" and subsequently described as "Satyagraha", on account of all the implications of the principles on which the fight was conducted. It was however, feared that what was possible in South Africa on account of the smallness of the population, and, therefore, the possibility of a united front of the heterogenous elements of the Indian community was not possible in India, with a vast population and diverse elements consisting of different religions, provinces, creeds, languages, interests, etc. Gandhiji had however, abundant faith in the righteousness and the adaptability of his method under Indian conditions. He, therefore, started his experiment by refusing to obey the order of the Motihari Magistrate banning an enquiry into the conditions of the Bihar Labour.

3. At that time, there was in Ahmedabad an old organisation called the Gujrat Sabha, which represented and worked for the political, social and economic welfare of Gujrat. Its work was being carried on, on the orthodox lines of the Liberals, namely, petitions and representations so far as government was concerned. Gandhiji was invited to accept the Presidentship of the Sabha, and, therefore, he inspired a new spirit in the Sabha.

4. The monsoon of 1917 was poor, and there was a failure of crops in the Kaira district. Following its old practice, the Sabha made representations to government, after a survey of the situation, submitting that crops had failed and that the government must make remissions. The case of the Sabha was both investigated and backed up by such eminent men as the late Mr. Vithalbhai Patel, the late Mr. Gokaldas Kahandas Parikh, the late Sir Ramanbhai Mahapatram and the late Dewan Bahadur Harilal Desai (Minister to the Government of Bombay from 1926-30). The Sabha appealed to the Divisional Commissioner, who as, usual, supported the action of the Collector. The Sabha appealed to government.

5. At this stage, Gandhiji led the Sabha to strike a new path on the line of direct action. The government were realising the dues from the agriculturists during the pendency of the Sabha's appeal to government. Gandhiji induced the Sabha to issue

instructions to the peasants to hold over payment till the Sabha's appeal was decided by government. Characteristic of his method of pursuing any public cause, he directed the Secretaries of the Sabha (of which the writer was one) to send a copy of the instructions to the peasants to the Divisional Commissioner. This was the first time that the bureaucracy was met with a firm stand by a public body, who had the boldness to advise the people to delay submitting to the official orders pending decision by government. There was nothing illegal or unconstitutional in the sort of instructions issued, but the Executive Officers had never till then come across such a thing. It is a matter of ordinary judicial procedure that, if an appeal is made by a dissatisfied party against the judgement of lower courts, the execution of the orders of the lower court is generally stayed pending the decision of the appeal. But this thing was foreign to the Executive Officers.

6. The Divisional Commissioner interpreted the instructions to the peasants given by the Sabha, as a direct call to disobey the orders of the subordinate officers, and threatened to take such action as he deemed proper under the circumstances. This created a very serious situation from the point of view of the Managing Committee of the Sabha, which was naturally accustomed to the old methods of liberal type. It was at this stage that Gandhiji advised the Sabha to leave the further work in the matter to a separate body, independent of the Sabha and distinct from it, though such a body naturally consisted of the members of the Sabha to a very large extent. Gandhiji then took the matter under his personal supervision and shifted the headquarters from Ahmedabad to Nadiad, a central place in the Kaira district. All the workers also shifted their headquarters, and Gandhiji carried on correspondence with the government on the subject, after getting information personally by visit to several villages and from reports of workers specially deputed to visit the villages and make enquiries about crops. Gandhiji would have been satisfied with an independent Committee of Enquiry. Though the dispute between the Government and the peasants was comparatively a minor one, the issue was important from two points of view. One was that, in the matter of every representation made by the public, the government always held that the officials were right and that public representations were either mis-informed or misconceived. This was an intolerable position. The other was that people did not find any remedy to have their grievances redressed if the highest authorities turned their representations down. In their ignorance, people were accustomed to take the adverse decision of government as their ill luck, and had, therefore, lost all spirit of resistance and the capacity to stick to what they believed to be true or correct and to suffer the consequences of such beliefs of theirs.

7. As anticipated, the government refused to appoint a Committee of Enquiry, because the Divisional Commissioner threatened to resign. It was a question of prestige for the bureaucracy. The people were not then accustomed to think that the prestige of the public was a much higher asset than the prestige of their servants. In fact, the servants were accepted as masters and the servants genuinely believed themselves to be masters.

8. On refusal by government, Gandhiji advised the peasantry to refuse to pay the assessment on the false basis of their being no failure of crops. This was the first experiment on a large scale of direct action undertaken in India. The Motihari refusal to obey the Magistrate's order was a case of individual civil disobedience. But this was a case of mass civil disobedience, though limited to small district and there too only to a small issue. The struggle went on for a few months, and it must be said to the credit of the Britisher that he realised all the implications of the struggle much earlier than many of our own countrymen. All pressure was brought by giving agriculturists notices of forfeiture of lands, but thanks to the presence of Gandhiji and his constant movement in the district from place to place, the people were not only non-violent, but were also very firm and prepared for any amount of sacrifices for the common cause. The whole struggle is a very interesting and instructive episode and deserves a special volume. In fact, such account is already published in Gujrati giving the whole story of the struggle.

9. The matter ended with an honourable compromise with government, whereby the fact asserted in the representation of the Sabha were accepted by government. Notices of forfeitures were withdrawn and the forfeited lands returned. The experiment was thus successfully made on a mass scale and it inspired a new confidence with a new outlook. The people saw that there was, after all, a new course open by which they could assert themselves and get

what they wanted. That was the course of Satyagraha, with the two essential conditions, namely (*i*) the righteousness of the cause and (*ii*) non-violent resistence with readiness to suffer all the consequences of disobedience.

10. The same principles were again applied in a different field—Labour and Capital. The labour organisations and the Labour movement sponsored by Shrimati Anusuya Sarabhai was directed and inspired by Gandhiji with a close association therewith from 1916-1917 to 1922-1923. During this period, there were two notable strikes of labour and both of them were honourably compromised. Gandhiji carried on all negotiations and made all concessions for a reasonable settlement before advising or starting a strike. He satisfied himself that the issue was just and fair, and then insisted that strikers should deem it a point of honour either to succeed or to perish in the struggle. There never was any idea of any humiliation of the other side, so that each further step did not involve any element of rancour or illwill which would interfere with the further progress. That is, why one sees, even today, the special strength of the Ahmedabad labour and the good relations between Capital and Labour in Ahmedabad. The Ahmedabad labour is politically more conscious, and in the struggle of August, 1942, they carried on a peaceful hartal for nearly 3½ months.

11. The narrative of important direct action campaigns in Gujrat would not be complete in its barest outlines without mention of the brilliant struggle by the Ahmedabad Municipality in the form of educational non-co-operation in 1921-22 and the Bardoli struggle of 1928 on the same lines and with issues of practically the same nature as the Kaira struggle of 1917-18.

12. It was Gandhiji who had given the younger section in the Ahmedabad Municipality, a proper outlook about the real nature of the character and functions of our local bodies. The administration of local bodies did not mean only provision of roads, lights, water, drainage, etc., but it has a pervading spirit of self-government. "Unless, therefore", argued Gandhiji, "you run your local bodies as institutions of Swaraj for the good of the whole population, how could you have any justification for claiming Swaraj for your province, or for your country"? This idea completely changed the fundamental outlook in the administration of local bodies, which came to be treated as small laboratories for training ourselves for the wider Swaraj that we were claiming. If the experiment succeeded in the local bodies, it was bound to be a success in the wider field.

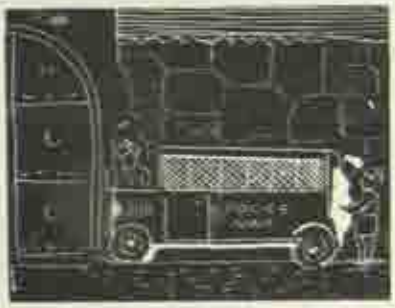
13. The new blood in the Ahmedabad Municipality was inspired with the above idea, and began to carry on its work on those lines under the leadership of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. The whole history of this municipality from 1918-1919 onwards is so brilliant as to justify a special volume in respect of both the national work and the constructive work, which it has done and is doing in furtherance of the ideal of Swaraj. No wonder, the Municipality is wedded to the Congress ideals.

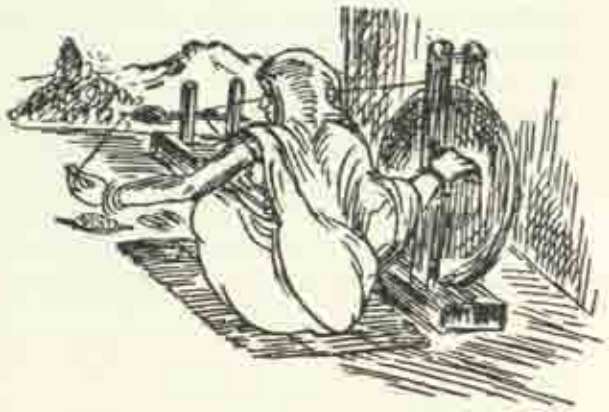
14. When the Special Session of the Congress at Calcutta in September, 1920, passed the famous Non-cooperation Resolution, the Ahmedabad Municipality followed suit. It informed the government that it would renounce the government grant for education, and that government ought not to interfere in the municipal administration of primary education. At first, the Government (with a popular Minister Sir R. P. Paranjipye in the days of diarchy) tried persuasion and non-cooperation. It tried to argue and then it refused to appoint valuation officers, refused to acquire properties for road widening and other purposes, refused to allow their officers to work for the educational administration, etc. The Municipality was adamant, and refused to allow any government officer to inspect the municipal schools. The government tried to coerce members into submission by laying down a very startling proposition of law, namely, that, if the inspection was not submitted to, the monies spent by the Municipality for the maintenance of primary schools would be treated as misapplication of municipal funds, and the members voting for the N.C.O. programme would be held personally liable for the same. Finding the members unyeilding, the government went to the length of superseding the Municipality for a period of two years from 9th February, 1922, and further, instituted a civil suit against 19 members, who had voted for the refusal of inspection for recovering from them, the huge sum of Rs. 1,63,000/-, being the amount of alleged misapplication. Similar stand was also taken by the Nadiad and Surat Municipalities, and they also met with the same fate. In Ahmedabad, since the Municipality was superseded, the N.C.O. members started primary schools. Almost

all the primary teachers of the Municipality gave up their jobs and undertook work in the newly started primary schools. The public also responded very splendidly by contributing to the cost of these schools by voluntary donations to the extent of about Rs. 12,000/- a month. These schools were carried on till the Municipality was reconstituted. Thereafter, all the teachers were again taken back in municipal service. The Government suit against the members failed in the first court, and the decision was confirmed in appeal by Government to the High Court.

15. The Bardoli struggle of 1928 is equally well known. There it was the question of Settlement, and the government were forced to appoint a Committee by refusing to pay the taxes till the Committee was appointed. The history of the struggle is written by the late Sjt. Mahadeo Desai in a separate book styled "The Story of Bardoli".







CHAPTER XX

NON-CO-OPERATION

THE years of non-co-operation movement are intimately connected with the lives of most of the present day Congressmen. The whole course of their lives underwent a drastic change in the case, not only of such celebrities as Nehru, Patel, Kripalani and Rajendra Prasad, but of the innumerable youngmen, then students, later constituting the backbone and spearhead of the Congress movement throughout these long years. In 1920 there was a definite change of parties in Indian politics and the old liberal leaders cut themselves off from the Congress. In the Congress itself a great transformation was taking place. This transformation had come in the person of Gandhi and the novel new ideology and technique that he had been experimenting upon and finally brought to bear on the Indian political question. An important part of the new doctrine was non-violence. The revolutionary fervour of the people and the political worker was no longer to be frittered away in futile outbreaks or in mere wordy protests and propaganda. To fight a great battle you had first to recruit, train and equip an army.

At the Amritsar session of the Congress, the central issue had been co-operation or obstruction. Gandhi had pleaded for co-operation and had condemned the violence on the part of the people. A few months later, the position had changed. Gandhi stood for non-co-operation and those who had opposed him at Amritsar were ranged against him.

The fact was that the new doctrine of non-co-operation was not only a gesture but a deliberate revolutionary new method of war against the Government, in which the fighters had to undergo discipline, hazards and hardships. Gandhiji's ideas about non-violent non-co-operation were embodied in a manifesto dated the 10th March. If the demands (about Khilafat and the Punjab) were not granted non-co-operation was the only remedy, that is, if open or secret warfare is ruled out.

The Hunter Committee Report was published on the 25th March. In May the peace terms with Turkey were published. The first decision on the policy and programme of non-co-operation was taken at a conference of Muslim and Hindu leaders at Allahabad on June 2nd, 1920. Jawaharlal who attended this meeting, records in his autobiography, his impression of this fateful meeting and the nervousness displayed by the sedate older elements, including Jinnah. The Khilafat conference had, in fact, adopted a scheme of progressive non-co-operation in earlier meetings. The ground was prepared for the Congress now to embark on what latter proved to be the most momentous decision in its whole career. In the meanwhile Lokmanya passed away on July 31st, but not before leaving his blessings for Gandhiji's success.

The special session of the Congress was to inaugurate the movement of non-co-operation. The country in the meanwhile was surcharged with an electric atmosphere. The Muslims embarked upon a plan of Hijrat. Gandhi and Ali brothers toured the country amidst tumultuous scenes of enthusiasm. Then, as ever after, Gandhi's endeavour was to discipline and regulate the popular enthusiasm into effective channels. In the meanwhile the various Provincial Congress Committees were invited to give their opinions on N.C.O.

The special session met at Calcutta from 4th to 9th September, 1920. Here Gandhiji moved the resolution on non-co-operation. He was opposed not only by the President elect, L. Lajpatrai but by other stalwart leaders like Chittaranjan Das, but ultimately carried the day. Pandit Motilal Nehru joined Gandhiji atonce and gave up his practice.

The country had now found a way to express its intense desire for freedom and a new atmosphere soon began to pervade it.

The non-co-operation programme was to be finally discussed and shaped at Nagpur. The number of delegates that the Nagpur Congress attracted were not exceeded by any Congress before or after Nagpur. The Nagpur Congress really marked the new era in the Freedom movement. The old feeling of impotent rage and importunate requests gave place to a new sense of responsibility and a self reliance. Lalaji and Deshbandhu came to oppose the proposals but stayed to be converted.

The Nagpur Congress made Gandhi the indisputedly supreme authority in the Congress and outside. Seasoned leaders like Pal and Malavya, Jinnah and Khaparde, and stalwart opponents like Das and Lalaji were all overpowered or won over. The Nagpur Congress also changed the creed of the Congress, "in such a fashion as to eleminate the declared adherence of that body to the British connection and to constitutional methods of agitation".

The Non-co-operation Resolution of the Nagpur Congress is quoted below :

THE NON-CO-OPERATION RESOLUTION

[Nagpur Session, 1920]

Whereas in the opinion of the Congress the existing Government of India has forfeited the confidence of the country ; and

whereas the people of India are now determined to establish Swaraj ; and

whereas all methods adopted by the people of India prior to the last special session of the Indian National Congress have failed to secure due recognition of their rights and liberties and the redress of their many and grevious wrongs, more specially in reference to the Khilafat and the Punjab ;

Now this Congress while reaffirming the resolution on Non-violent Non-co-operation passed at the special session of the Congress at Calcutta declares that the scheme of Non-violent Non-co-operation with the renunciation of voluntary association with the present government at one end and the refusal to pay taxes at the other, should be put in force at a time to be determined by either the Indian National Congress or the All India Congress Committee and that in the meanwhile, to prepare the country for it, effective steps should continue to be taken in that behalf :—

(a) by calling upon the parents and guardians of school children (and not the children themselves) under the age of 16 years to make greater efforts for the purpose of withdrawing them from such schools as are owned, aided or in any way controlled by Government and concurrently to provide for their training in national schools or by such other means as may be within their power in the absence of such schools ;

(b) by calling upon students of the age of 16 and over to withdraw without delay, irrespective of consequences, from institutions owned, aided or in any way controlled by Government, if they feel that it is against their conscience to continue in institutions which are dominated by a system of government which the nation has solemnly resolved to bring to an end, and advising such students either to devote themselves to some special service in connection with the non-co-operation movement or to continue their education in national institution ;

(c) by calling upon trustees, managers and teachers of Government affiliated or aided schools and municipalities and local boards to help to nationalise them ;

(d) by calling upon lawyers to make greater efforts to suspend their practice and to devote their attention to national service including boycott of law courts by litigants and fellow-lawyers and the settlement of disputes by private arbitration.

(e) In order to make India economically independent and self-contained, by calling upon merchants and traders to carry out a gradual boycott of foreign

trade relations, to encourage hand-spinning and hand-weaving, and in that behalf by having a scheme of economic boycott planned and formulated by a Committee of experts to be nominated by the All India Congress Committee ;

(*f*) and in as much as self-sacrifice is essential to the success of non-co-operation, by calling upon every section and every man and woman in the country to make the utmost possible contribution of self-sacrifice to the national movement.

Organising Congress Committees.

(*g*) by organising Committees in each village or group of villages with a provincial central organisation in the principal cities of each province for the purpose of accelerating the progress of non-co-operation ;

(*h*) by organising a ban of national workers for a service to be called the Indian National Service ; and

(*i*) by taking effective steps to raise a national fund to be called the All India Tilak Memorial Swarajya Fund for the purpose of financing the foregoing National Service and the non-co-operation movement in general.

This Congress congratulates the nation upon the progress made so far in working the programme of non-co-operatin, specially with regard to the boycott of councils by the voters, and claims, in the circumstances in which they have been brought into existence, that the new Councils do not represent the Country and trust that those, who have allowed themselves to be elected in spite of the declared wish of their respective constituencies in direct negation of the principle of democracy, the electors will studiously refrain from asking for any political service from such Councillors.

This Congress recognises the growing friendliness between the Police and the soldiery and the people, and hopes that the former will refuse to subordinate their creed and country to the fulfilment of orders of their officers, and, by courteous and considerable behaviour towards the people, will remove the reproach hitherto levelled against them that they are devoid of any regard for the feelings and sentiments of their own people.

And this Congress appeals to all people in Government employment, pending the call of the nation for resignation of their service, to help the national cause by importing greater kindness and stricter honesty in their dealings with their people and fearlessly and openly to attend all popular gatherings whilst refraining from taking active part therein and, more specially, by openly rendering financial assistance to the national movement.

This Congress desires to lay special emphasis on Non-violence being the integral part of the non-co-operation resolution and invites the attention of the people to the fact that Non-violence in word and deed is as essential between people themselves, as in respect of the Government and this Congress is of opinion that the spirit of violence is not only contrary to the growth of a true spirit of democracy, but actually retards the enforcement (if necessary) of the other stages of non-co-operation.

Finally, in order that the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs may be redressed and Swarajya established within one year, this Congress urges upon all public bodies, whether affiliated to the Congress or otherwise, to devote their exclusive attention to the promotion of non-violent non-co-operation with the Government and, in as much as the movement of non-co-operation can only succeed by complete co-operation amongst the people themselves this Congress calls upon public association to advance Hindu-Muslim Unity and the Hindu delegates of this Congress call upon the leading Hindus to settle all disputes between Brahmins and Non-Brahmins, wherever they may be existing, and to make special effort to rid Hinduism of the reproach of untouchability, and respectfully urges the religious heads to help the growing desire to reform Hinduism in the matter of its treatment of the suppressed classes."

The Nagpur Congress had inaugurated a programme of Direct Action combined with constructive work, to recruit the masses, to train and drill them as a non-violent army and to initiate battles of increasing seriousness.

The response to the Nagpur Congress soon began to manifest itself. Numerous lawyers left their profession. Large number of students left colleges and Universities in the U. P., Punjab, Bombay and Bengal. Thrilling scenes were wit-

nessed in this memorable year and a half. National Colleges were set up and institutions came into being such as Bihar Vidyapith, Gujrat Vidyapith, Kashi Vidyapith, Bengal National University, Tilak Maharasthra Vidyapith, Lahore National College, National Muslim University and others. The most serious minded and finest elements among our youth were thus drawn into the battle for freedom and together with the lawyers and others have constituted the most active part in the Congress and outside eversince.

A countrywide vigorous campaign was carried to organise Congress Committees, and collect funds, the Tilak Swaraj fund of one crore. The third item was the propagation of the spinning wheel.

Khadi was the pivotal programme of village penetration and reconstruction. On its negative side it was a counter part of the boycott programme. Khadi, with the 'Gandhi Cap' also gave the army of non-violence a uniform and bond of kinship.

AHMEDABAD SESSION OF 1921.

The era of non-violent revolution in the country had reached its peak when the Congress met at Ahmedabad. A great change had been going on in the shape and character of the Congress and this became manifest in the Session. The Plenary Session of the Congress, infact has been the mirror of the movement outside, an epitome of the mind and turmoil of a whole sub-continent. We have a cross section of the earlier liberal gatherings in the account of the Allahabad Session given by Dr. Sinha. A rather jarring note came into evidence in these decorous assemblies by the rise of the extrimists at Calcutta and later at Surat. With the coming of Gandhiji, the Congress Sessions became mighty rallies of the swelling armies of national workers.

The Session at Ahmedabad was organised by Sardar Vallabhbhai as Chairman and Shri Mavalankar as the Secretary of the Reception Committee. This Session became a landmark and a model for various new features. A short description of this Session is given from Shri Mavalankar's Report.

There were several new features in the arrangements made at Ahmedabad.

A vast city of camps was specially erected for the accommodation of delegates and visitors, with an elaborate layout of roads and parks, sanitary and conservancy arrangements, water supply and lighting, post and telegraph office, bank, transport, hospital, community kitchens, baths and other amenities.

All the structures were made up of khadi and the huge pandal also was covered with hand spun and hand woven khadi.

The sitting arrangements in the Pandal were for the first time made, not with chairs but on khadi covered floor in oriental style. The number of visitors was restricted inside the Pandal to 3,000, while a special Pandal was put up for the large gathering of people who were addressed by the leaders.

A volunteer corps of about 14,000, including a good number of women volunteers had been trained and accommodated in a special camp.

The Reception Committee had organised a Swadeshi Exhibition that came to be held yearly along with Congress Sessions henceforth. It included a demonstration Section in which various stages of the manufacture of cloth were shown and expert spinners and craftsmen from different provinces participated.

A memorable feature of this Session was its sanitary and conservancy arrangements. A special band of volunteer workers belonging to all castes laboured with their own hands in keeping the Nagar clean and putting earth in the trench privies.

The Muslim League had also put up, with the Khilafat Committee a camp known as Muslim Nagar near the Khadinagar.

The life in the nagar was a great object lesson in a new way of life, simple and clean and in efficient business like organisation and community life. A central kitchen had been put up by the Reception Committee which was a model of wholesome and simple dietary and cooking, while some of the Provincial Committees had been helped to undertake special kitchen to cater to provincial tastes.

The nagar was a beehive of cheerful activity and national fervour, and its memory and impression was carried long and wide.

All this huge arrangement had been done at a remarkable low cost. A new technique in simplicity and efficiency marked Congress sessions and activity henceforth. Another special feature of this Session was the statement of receipts and disbursements of the funds that accounted for every pie and were audited and published immediately after the Session with the Report of the Reception Committee. This report, atonce brief and illuminating, was itself a striking feature.

An account of this Session as given by Mahatma Gandhi at the time is still worth reproducing :

RECEPTION COMMITTEE ARRANGEMENTS.

The Congress week was a week of joy and celebration. None thought that Swaraj was not attained. Every one seemed to be conscious of the growing national strength. There was confidence and hope written in every face. The Reception Committee had provided for admitting one hundred thousand visitors to the Congress Pandal. But the lowest calculation puts down the figure at two lacs. The rush was so great that it became impossible to issue either season tickets or the entrance tickets. And this phenominal attendance would have been still larger if all kinds of false rumours had not been started to scare away people. The imprisonment of leaders and workers and their courage have filled the people with a new hope and a new joy. There was a feeling in the air that the people had found in suffering the surest remedy for the attainment of freedom and breaking down the mightiest force that might be pitted against it.

The Constitution has worked for a year and in my humble opinion it has proved a thorough success. There was a serious business air about the Subjects Committee which had ample time for deliberation. It was a committee not chosen hap-hazard, but deliberately by electors who knew what they were doing. The Congress itself was an impressive spectacle. Hakimji made an ideal and patient President in the place of Deshabandhu Chitta Ranjan Das. The delegates insisted upon their doubts being solved before they voted. They insisted on understanding everything that was going on.

Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel, Chairman of the Reception Committee, took no more than fifteen minutes to read his address in Hindi. There were no speeches to induct the President. The whole of the function was performed by the All-India Congress Committee. That saved at least two hours of the twelve thousand delegates and visitors. The President's address took no more than twenty minutes. Every speech was to the point and not a minute was allowed to be wasted in idle talk.

In the nature of things too, it could not well be otherwise. The resolutions were addressed to the nation. They presented a programme of earnest work that had got to be done if the nation was to find her place in the world.

Extraordinary care was therefore taken both in the Subjects Committee and the Congress to see that the resolutions were properly understood before they were voted upon.

So much for the business side.

The spectacular was no less impressive. The Pandal itself was a majestic structure covered with Khadi all over. The arches also of Khadi, the Subjects Committee pandal of Khadi. A beautiful fountain surrounded by green lawns ornamented the front of the Pandal. At the back was a large pandal for overflow meetings where all that had gone in the Congress Pandal was explained to the thousands of admiring spectators on the other side, a gorgeous appearance.

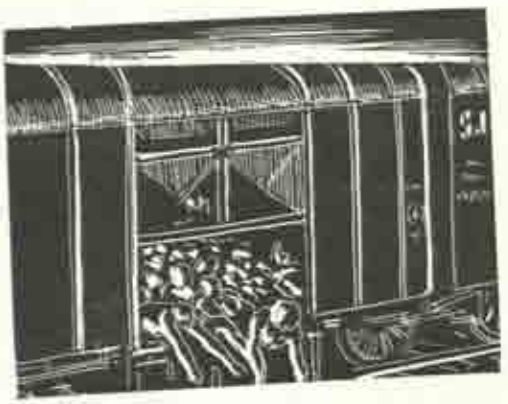
The Exhibition ground was quite near. It attracted huge crowds. It was a complete success. The attendence was beyond all expectation, no less than forty thousand visited the Exhibition daily. It was a unique demonstration of what India can produce. The chief attraction was the party from Chikacole who demonstrated all the processes of cotton leading to the drawing out of yarn up to 100 counts. No machinery could possibly make the snow-like silvers that the delicate hands of the women of Andhra produced with their simple bones. No machine could draw the exquisite thread that the delicate fingers of the Andhra women drew. The music of the spindle, as it performed its gentle revolutions, is incapable of being reproduced. The evolution that Khadi has undergone during the year could also be studied in a room where every variety of Khadi was collected. The paintings from Shanti-

niketan and elsewhere and the beautiful carvings afforded instruction to the close student as well as the ordinary spectator. The musical concerts in which musicians from all parts of India took part was an irresistible attraction for thousands of spectators. It ended in the convening by Vishnu Digambar Shastri of the first All India Musical Conference, whose object is to popularise music in national assemblies and organise Bhajan Mandalis.

The Khadi Nagar, the adjoining Muslim Nagar, and the Khilafat pandal next to it were a triumphant demonstration of Hindu-Muslim Unity and an ocular demonstration of the hold that Khadi has on the public. The Reception Committee used only Khadi manufactured in Gujrat and worth three hundred and fifty thousand rupees. The Committee paid Rs. 50,000 for the use of the Khadi. All the tents including a big kitchen and store-house were covered with Khadi. Nearly two thousand volunteers, both Hindu and Musalman and including a few Parsis and Christians, looked after all the arrangements for the guests in both Khadi Nagar and Muslim Nagar.

The sanitary arrangements were a special feature. Trenches were dug for the purpose. Perfect privacy was secured by Khadi partitions. And the excreta were covered by clean earth after every use. Every time the trench was used, it was therefore found to be in a clean condition. The work of attending to the trenches was done not by paid Bhangis but by unpaid volunteers belonging to all castes and religions. Those only were taken who had no repugnance to this necessary work. The reader may not know that the process is so clean and so expeditious that the cleaner does not have to touch the excreta or the earth. He has but to take a few shovelfuls of earth, and with it carefully cover up the dirt. The result of this simple attention was that the camp was clean, sweet and free from the plague of flies. All the camps were lighted by electricity.

(Young India, Jan. 5, 1922).





CHAPTER XXI

BARDOLI AND ITS SARDAR

1. STORY OF BARDOLI

Shri G. C. Sondhi

IT is strange that the significance of Bardoli is little realised by those who talk of a Labour and Kisan Movement as distinct from the "bourgeois" movement of the Congress. In their attempt to fit every situation into a prefabricated mould, the leftists have overlooked the fact that the Gandhian Congress sought its inspiration and strength from being a movement of the people or the kisans. The two terms were synonymous in India. Bardoli was, if anything, the spearhead of a military agrarian movement.

It will be seen, how from the start Gandhi believed that the key to Swaraj lay in the villages. His strategy was and has always been to choose a small target and focuss all national forces on what looked a moderate issue, but was really a part of an explosive chain, the keystone of a whole edifice. We have seen how he chose earlier, a direct attack on the most collosal fact of British rule, the fact of the agrarian situation, in Champaran and in Kaira. In fact non-co-operation movement was only a preparation for a present revolution, the mobalisation and training necessary to attack the citadel. This attack was to be started at Bardoli. But had to be given up after one or two attempts. Chaurachauri had finally convinced Gandhi that the time was not yet.

A time of political slump had followed. But while brilliant and great leaders had found vent for their activity in a constitutional program that, even though militant, was rather futile, others kept the spirit of resistance alive by defiance of the Law on particular issues. Most of the other large number of workers kept themselves busy in the villages in constructive program, forging the Congress into a Kisan movement, strengthening the masses and establishing contact for future revolutionary activity.

The story of Bardoli is important not only as a landmark in the march to freedom, but as giving, at a high level, the true pattern of the Gandhian technique. To "BARDOLISE" the country, hence forward became the ambition and plan of the national movement.

This technique may, perhaps, be analysed as: (1) the choice of a just, moderate and direct issue; (2) preparing the mass of people for fearless and disciplined defiance; (3) Simultaneous work of education, moral uplift and material betterment of the people; (4) readiness for negotiation and compromise with the adversary, (5) skilful steering of the movement to intenser and wider activity from stage to stage in sacrifice and suffering on one hand and aggressive defiance of authority on the other.

The story of Bardoli incidently gives a picture of the type of leadership in the Congress at this time. Non-co-operation had brought to the fore



Sardar of Bardoli tours the country

Mr. K. M. Munshi and Mrs. Lilavati Munshi in the picture.



An historic scene at Bardoli.

Apostles and Martyrs of Communal Concord

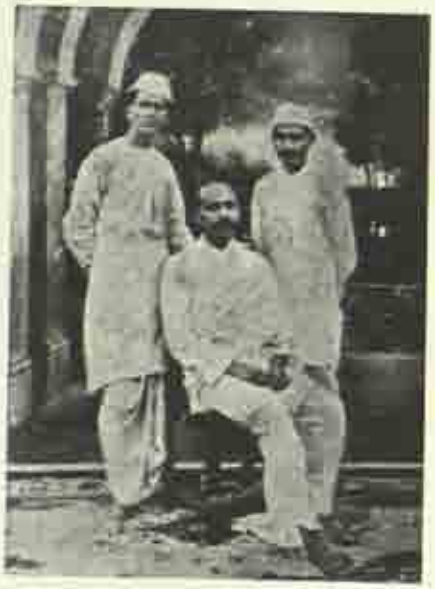


Swami Shradhanand



Shri Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi

Leaders of Nagpur Flag Satyagrah



S. Vallabhbhai and his Comrades

brilliant men, eminent in professions, scholarship, in parliamentary debate and political acumen, but now becoming peoples' man, and developing a capacity for revolutionary leadership. The Deshbandhu, Nehrus, Azad were among these. There was another type, who came from the people or the villagers and found it easy to shed their western masquerade. Among these were Rajendra Prasad in Bihar and Vallabhbhai in Gujrat.

Vallabhbhai had come under Gandhi's spell much earlier and had already rediscovered himself in kaira, in the work of municipality in Ahamedabad, in Borsad and in the Nagpur Flag Satyagrah.

Gandhiji once, while arguing with the revolutionaries, remarked that he would retire in favour of, even a man of sword, if he found he was truly a man of the people, who gave up the plough to take to the sword.

The choice to lead the cherished campaign of Bardoli—which was to be a model and inspiration to the rest of the country—fell on Vallabhbhai deliberately.

It was six years letter, in 1928, that an opportunity came to redeem the pledge of Bardoli.

Bardoli was to have one of the periodical resettlements of land which occurred once in a stated period of 20 or 30 years, when Land Revenue was raised by another 25 per cent or so. The people of Bardoli would not pay this enhancement and first demanded an impartial investigation into economic conditions, burden of taxation, and such things as the state of roads in these villages. All the constitutional methods were tried for Government acceptance of the demand for a Committee of enquiry. Then an ultimatum was issued and a no tax campaign was organised. Vallabhbhai was invited to lead this battle by the Kisans in their Taluka conference. The initiative did not come from the Congress, but the villagers themselves, this time.

Bardoli was a typical tehsil with less than a lakh of population, the bulk of whom were agriculturists, with a sprinkling of money lenders, and other petty traders and occupants of larger holdings. Quite a considerable number of Gandhiji's Satyagrahis in South Africa were from Bardoli, including several Musalmans. Intense constructive work, organisation of National schools and Khadi centres, Social reform, Prohibition, etc., had been carried on in Bardoli since Gandhijis arrest, six years ago.

The detailed story of Bardoli, the planning and organisation carried patiently and cautiously from step to step that was to pit this insignificant set of villages against the might of the British Empire is too long to relate here.

Vallabhbhai came to live in the midst of these villagers as one of them and took up the organisation.

For dealing with the Muslim population, he was assisted by the veteran leaders Abbas Tyabji and Iman Saheb. A host of other trained workers were at his disposal and besides them the agriculturists spontaneously raised volunteers from among themselves. These were to serve in their own villages, to collect and carry information. Daily news-bulletins and pamphlets with Vallabhbhai's speeches were published and distributed, not only in these villages but in towns and villages outside Bardoli. The stirring, simple words of Vallabhbhai sent a new thrill not only in Bardoli but in the whole of Gujrat at this time.

"I know that some of you are afraid of your lands being confiscated. What is confiscation? Will they take the lands away to England? The worst that can happen is that the lands might be transferred to Government in their books, but if you are united you can defy any one to come forward to cultivate the lands. And rest assured when you are ready to allow your lands to be confiscated the whole of Gujrat will be at your back." And:

"Organise your village and you will set an example to others. The campaign has begun. Every village must now be an armed camp. The news from every village must reach the Taluka head quarters daily and punctually and every instruction from the head quarters most promptly be obeyed. Decipline and organisation means half the battle. Government have at the most one patel and one talati to every village. For us every adult in the village must be a volunteer."

While preparations were thus going on the villages, Vallabhbhai was carrying a correspondence with the Government. But the Government was not to yield and the warning was given that if the people

of Bardoli defaulted in the payment of revenue, acting on their own or yielding to the advice of persons from outside, they would have to suffer the consequence.

Vallabhbhai while thanking the Government for the threat and the warning reminded the Revenue Secretary that he evidently "missed the fact that the Government which you represent is truly dominated by persons from outside." He assured that he was in Bardoli at people's instant and is ready to be dismissed by them. "I wish it were equally easy and equally possible for them to dispense with a rule imposed from without by force of arms which is daily sapping their vitality."

The Government soon began to act. Both threats and cajolery began to be used. In one village some banias paid the new assessment. But the people were not demoralised. Vallabhbhai had prepared them against such desertions. A Satyagraha pledge was now being signed by all the villages.

The soul stirring eloquence of Vallabhbhai, in the peasants' patois and peasants' idiom, had raised them to exalted heights, and fired them with a fearless resolve.

"I see that these 15 days have taught you to cast fear from your hearts. You are however not yet completely free from it. Two annas in the rupee is still there. Shake it off." And:

"You have lost the capacity of righteous indignation against wrong. The absence of it is cowardice. I go about in your village at dead of night sometimes, without ever once being asked, 'Halt Who goes there?' Ravi Sankar tells me with surprise, that, in those villages not a dog barks and not a buffalo flourishes its horns at a stranger. It is your quiescence that has been your undoing. I want to inoculate you with fearlessness, I want to galvanise you into life. I miss in your eyes the flash of indignation against wrong."

Notices of forfeiture now began to be served by the Government on selected land-lords who were expected to show weakness. But this was having no effect. Every day the strength and organisation of the villages grew. Help in the shape of men and women workers and funds now began to come from outside. The world outside was becoming aware and was thrilled with what was happening in Bardoli. In the village itself enthusiasm reached a higher and higher level and the scenes of the mamoth meetings, of men and women of those days cannot be forgotten by those who participated in them.

Shri Mahadev Desai in his "The story of Bardoli" has described some of these memorable gatherings and recorded the speeches, which educated the people into a new revolutionary doctrine and way of life.

"Government is like a wild elephant run amuck. But the gnat need not fear the elephant. The elephant can never trample it to death, but the gnat can certainly prove formidable to the elephant." And:—"Remember the law of nature. You cannot have these heaps of cotton unless a few cotton seeds are buried under the earth and destroyed. But they are reborn again with a larger life. And hardship and misery are not new things to you. Who puts up with heat, cold, rain as the tiller of the soil does?" A more dangerous proposition still:

"The agriculturist and the labourer are the two main pillars of the state. They are the real producers of wealth. But they don't enjoy wealth. How can you tolerate this state of things? Organise your taluka so that it may be a model to others.

The longer this fight lasts, the better for you and worse for Government. You have as yet lost nothing. Even if you lose your lands and your belongings, you will have won fearlessness and vindicated your honour at a negligible cost. You have been until now heweres of wood and drawers of water. The fight will have taught you to come to your own."

The new life in the villages began to manifest itself in many ways, in better cleanliness, in temperance, in revival of Khadi, in awakening among the women, in the setting up of schools and Ashramas.

Also Bardoli was making Vallabhbhai. This close contact with the people and the burning zeal and rage that Vallabhbhai was experiencing and transmitting had brought home to him the stark reality, the central reality in India, the condition of the peasant. It became clearer and clear to him and he developed his apothesis of the peasant on a two fold basis, his keen appreciation of very high place of the peasant in a true social economy and

his poignant anguish at the very low state to which the peasant has been reduced, by the Government, supported by the 'educated' classes.

As Gandhiji put it "Vallabhbhai found his Vallabh (God) in Bardoli." Bardoli had created its Sardar.

The further story of Bordoli is quite famous. The Government soon mobilised all its machinery; distraint of property, cattle, horses, and moveable goods began, and a reign of fightfulness and lawlessness was soon let loose, in rising tide and ferocity. Many of the workers begun to be arrested and imprisoned, after mock trials by special magistrates. Bardoli had by now become the cynosure of all eyes in India.

It had stood the fire beyond all expectations. Attempts at breaches in its ranks had failed and the bania, the parsi and the musalman had all stood fast. The heroism of the simple women of Bardoli was an inspiration for the whole country. In Ahmedabad and in Bombay news about Bardoli were anxiously awaited and read. There were meetings of protest and for relief and the Working Committee of the Congress that met in Bombay passed a resolution on Bardoli that rang through the country. Several M. L. C.s had already resigned their seats on the Bombay Legislative Council. Many of the leaders visited Bardoli at this time. As Jamanalal Bajaj put it they came to purify themselves and warm themselves at the sacred flame that had been lit in the villages there. There were special conferences and Bardoli Days and Bombay was too eager to contribute funds and to show their honour and love for Bardoli and its Sardar. Bardoli was now attracting even wider attention. Special correspondents were sent there and spread news of alarming stubbornness of the villagers. Houses were deserted. A "Scortched earth" policy was followed and people lived as if in war trenches. The special correspondent of the Bombay Times was reported with flaming head lines: 'Peasant Rebillion', 'Bolshevik Regime in Bardoli'. Reuter warned England of the Soviet Regime being established! There were questions in the House of Commons. The Government frantically intensified its repression and re-enforced the garrison at Bardoli. Also negotiations were opened with Vallabhbhai by the Government. The elephant was feeling powerless against the gnat. But threats of crushing the movement were reiterated. Vallabhbhai kept a complete balance of mind, and combined firmness with fairness and moderation in his demands. Bardoli had become an all India question and arrest of Vallabhbhai would not help the Government any longer. The question had been raised to a legal and constitutional issue also, in which the Government felt its position increasingly impossible. A settlement was ultimately brought about. The disciplined but revolutionary battle had ended in a triumph for the peasantry who fought with the weapons of truth and patient suffering against an enemy who could any day have crushed them to atoms.

It was the first great victory of Satyagraha on a mass scale, in which the victors and the vanquished both are winners.

There is no doubt that the example of Bardoli was an abiding source of inspirations all through the subsequent struggle in our freedom movement. It also helped the Imperial bureaucracy to a realisation of the potential development of even an unarmed revolution.

But even more than this, Bardoli is remembered with gratitude to-day for the Sardar that it gave us, the astute and fearless leader, who rejoiced in battle and difficulties, and built up the Congress from strength to strength, guarding it from external onslaughts and internal disruption. We are more grateful to-day than ever for the firm and skilful handling of the States' problem, that has saved our country from a score of Pakistans, a complete balkanisations that our enemies hoped for, and for having a skilful skipper who is capable of steering the ship of our young State through perilous seas.

2. THE SARDAR OF BARDOLI

Shri G. V. Mavlankar

To attempt a portrayal of the life and work of Shri Vallabhbhai Patel, enshrined in the hearts of the people as the "Sardar" is a matter of pleasure and privilege for one who has been associated with him for all these long and eventful years. While it helps in the understanding of a personality that inspires such wide respect and awe, love and loyalty, it incidently throws a side-light on the transformation

that took place in our public and private life with the advent of Gandhiji. The story of Vallabhbhai is the story of the Country's re-birth.

And as I try and turn the pages of memory, events crowd to the mind and it is hard to select one from the other.

It was on the 13th of February 1913 that the Sardar landed at Bombay as a Barrister and came to Ahmedabad the next morning. He knew very well the then Chief Justice Sir Basil Scott and, therefore, naturally called on him at Bombay. Sir Basil received him well and offered to give him all support, including a professorship at the Government Law School (the College was then known as School), if Vallabhbhai would stay at Bombay. But Vallabhbhai having no attractions and ambitions for the first place in the Bombay Legal World preferred to come over to Ahmedabad. He had his own plans for serving his people and selected Ahmedabad as the centre for his future public activities. What a happy coincidence that, two years later Gandhiji also selected the same place! Friends all over the country will appreciate the just pride and the local patriotism of the people of Ahmedabad, when their hearts are full of exuberance and joy, at the idea that they—their city—have contributed in such a rich fashion in the leadership of Indian Nationalism, and in the shaping of the Country's destiny.

A smart young man, dressed in a well-cut suit with a felt hat worn slightly at an angle, piercing and bright eyes, not given to many words, receiving visitors with just a smile but not entering into any conversation, maintaining firm and pensive looks, appearing almost to look upon the world with a sort of superiority complex, talking with an impress of confidence and superiority whenever he opened his lips and carrying an appearance of sternness and reserve. Such was the new barrister, who had come to Ahmedabad for practice. He was naturally a centre of attention for the Junior Bar. His personality, demeanour, etc. had their own attractions. Mixed feelings of attraction, respect, awe and perhaps a feeling of subdued resentment also, at the way he seemed to look at others.

He had, as a lawyer, mostly criminal practice. His cross-examination of witness was brief but pointed and he showed such a masterly judgment of men that, he could make out by a piercing glance at the witness as to the type the witness was and would lead his attack by way of cross-examination accordingly. His conduct of his cases always exhibited thorough mastery of facts, a proper and correct estimate of the opponent's case and line of attack and a carefully planned defence and attack. But the one great quality which struck everybody and made him the object of admiration was his fearlessness, with which he would deal with the court in which he was appearing. He would never allow the judge to outstep even in the least, the limits of courtesy nor would he allow or tolerate any unfair, unjust or improper leaning on the part of the Court in favour of the police or the prosecution, and would call a spade a spade.

Not only in his profession but in daily life outside, Vallabhbhai brought a new spirit and standard of behaviour in standing up boldly against injustice and resist aggressions of the officials and Europeans in their relations with Indians. There are several small incidents which helped in bringing about a slow change. It is difficult for the present generations to appreciate the general atmosphere of separation, fear and cowardice which had deprived the educated Indians of the sense of self-respect and equality of status with the Europeans as man to man. We have to view the part played by Gandhiji and Vallabhbhai with this background to enable us to appraise the real value of their work and their services to the Country.

Practice of law for the purpose of earning a fortune and living a comfortable life of ease and personal enjoyment was never his ideal. Born of poor parents in the village of Karamsad in the Borsad Taluka of the Kaira District and brought up literally as an agriculturist, knowing the condition and hardship of the village folk, he had always the idea of the service of the community. He had to strive hard for his education and all through he was self-reliant. This struggle in early life made him what he is. Blessed with a strong native shrewdness and clarity of judgment, he combines habits of self-reliance, determination and industry, that were to help him in the sterner fields of activity later.

Mr. Vallabhbhai did not enter public life immediately on arrival in India though that was his chief aim of life. He was watching, studying and establishing contacts. Public life was then almost exclusively restricted to the lawyer class. Gandhiji

who had started his satyagrahashram in Ahmedabad in 1915 was also desirous of having contact with leaders of public life in Ahmedabad. With that end in view, he visited the Gujrat Club, once or twice just to meet people there and explain to them his ideas about his satyagrahashram. Vallabhbhai kept aloof and was very sceptical and critical about Gandhiji's ideas and plans. Thus for nearly 2 years after Gandhiji was in Ahmedabad, Vallabhbhai had kept away from him. He was brutally blunt in expressing his view. When Gandhiji came to the Club, Vallabhbhai was at his game of bridge with his friend, Mr. Thakore, and I was sitting by his side watching it. When I got up to go to the group of elders where Gandhiji came, Vallabhbhai passed very sarcastic remarks discouraging me from going to hear the talks. Could any one have then even dreamt that this person would be a trusted follower and firm believer in Gandhian philosophy, technique and leadership? But this transformation has come about as the result of closer and closer association and comradeship with Gandhiji, in self-less service of the country, which means the cause of the poor and down-trodden.

He started his public life independently by entry in the Ahmedabad Municipality in about 1916. He took no time to make his mark by the thoroughness of his work. He spared neither time nor industry to go into the details of administration and did yeoman's service to the city as Chairman of the Sanitary Committee.

Ahmedabad was singularly free from visitations of plague from 1896 onwards, notwithstanding the ravages of the epidemic in other parts of the country. The situation, however, got a bit serious in about October, 1917. For the first time people went outside to live in huts and our Courts were as good as closed. The responsibility of the Chairman, Sanitary Committee, was heavy. Mr. Vallabhbhai stood at his post. He continued to live in the city and was seen moving round with the Municipal staff for effective sanitation under his personal guidance. This was, a new departure in the outlook and method of service by city fathers.

Ahmedabad had in the Gujrat Sabha, a political organisation for the whole of Gujrat started in about 1884 and functioning on the old liberal lines. In 1916, a session of the Bombay Provincial Conference (very probably 16th session) was organised by the Sabha at Ahmedabad under the Presidentship of Mr. Mohamed Ali Jinnah. Vallabhbhai took no prominent part in this, though he attended it. He had restricted himself to his Municipal work.

In about July, 1917, Messrs. Vallabhbhai and the late Diwan Bahadur Harilal Desai (some time Minister to the Government of Bombay during the days of dyarchy) were elected secretaries of the Gujrat Club and I was elected Joint Secretary. It was at the club that we received, one afternoon, the news about the heroic stand of Gandhi in the court of the Motihari (Bihar) Magistrate who banned Gandhiji's inquiry into the conditions of labour employed by the European planter in Bihar. This was the first act, in India, of Gandhiji's technique of non-violent resistence. Gandhiji refused to obey the magesterial order and preferred imprisonment to the abandonment of the inquiry. This act of Gandhiji electrified all of us at the club. The late Diwan Bahadur Harilal Desai jumped up and waving his hands exclaimed 'Mavalankar, here is a brave man; and we must have him as our (Gujrat Sabha) President! It was this occasion which attracted Vallabhbhai more to the Gujrat Sabha; and his attention, hitherto restricted to the Municipality, began to be diverted more and more into the affairs of the Sabha. Gandhiji accepted our invitation to the President of Sabha and that was the beginning of Vallabhbhai being drawn nearer to and in Gandhiji's activities and methods. Brave as he was, the bravery in Gandhiji found in him a ready response. This was a small beginning of the present close identification of both in comradeship in the service of the Motherland.

The Sabha was carrying on many activities with all of which he was associated as member of the Committee and sometime as office-bearer. As Secretary of the Sabha, I had thus the good luck of closer association with him as our work increased. One of the most important of the Sabha's political work was the question of redress to the Kaira agriculturists on failure of crops in the monsoon of 1917. The Sabha made all possible representations to the Government officials—from the Collector of Kaira to the Government—with the active help and support of all the then big guns. But the bureaucracy was adamant and it became necessary to carry the matter further. All the members of the Sabha were in entire sympathy with Gandhiji's plans of action but it was considered better to organise an

independent Committee for pressing the matter further on Government; and Gandhiji started correspondence with Government and their officers and we also began to collect evidence in support of our case. This was the beginning of the Kaira No-rent campaign of 1917, the first popular struggle of its kind in the whole of India, boldly challenging the case of the Government and inspiring confidence in people in the potentialities of their own strength.

The whole story of the struggle is very fascinating. Gandhiji decided to fix up his headquarters in Kaira District, but as he was busy at Motihari, he could not stay continuously. Time was of essence; organisation of the struggle could not be postponed and Vallabhbhai had, therefore, to shoulder the burden of being Gandhiji's lieutenant to work with him in the Kaira district. It was his native district where he had passed his childhood, the people were brave and had known Vallabhbhai intimately. Gandhiji could not have secured a better lieutenant than this. Vallabhbhai also threw himself heart and soul into the struggle and our headquarters were shifted from Ahmedabad to Nadiad. Gandhiji used to come and stay off and on to supervise and direct the movement. It was an exceptional opportunity for all of us to study Gandhiji's mind and method and to appreciate the potentialities of his philosophy of "Truth and Non-Violence", of "direct action" (Satyagraha) applied to the political field. It was here that Vallabhbhai was first seen moving amongst the people, shorn of his hat, coat and pant. Dressed in simple dhoti and shirt, he moved about day and night. The first experiment in satyagraha in India was successful; and Vallabhbhai, as many others became a devoted admirer and follower of Gandhiji.

Thereafter came, in 1919, a very stirring phase in the National Struggle. The Rowlat Act, the Jalianwala Baug moved the nation to its depths. The historical Hartal of 6th April, 1919, the proposed Satyagraha, the arrest of Gandhiji at Palwal, the civic commotion on 11th April, 1919 in Ahmedabad, the exhibition of the anti-Government feelings by setting on fire Government building, police chawkies etc. Events were marching fast and so was public life. It was tending to become a whole time job. Vallabhbhai defended some of the accused in the 1919 disturbances. Those were his last appearances as Counsel.

After 1919 followed the momentous change in the attitude of the Indian National Congress. The Calcutta Session in September, 1920, adopted the non-violent non-co-operation programme and the Municipality of Ahmedabad was not slow in giving a practical effect to it. Soon came the Nagpur Congress of 1920. The next Session was invited to be held at Ahmedabad in December, 1921, and the whole country was thrilled and electrified by the N.C.O. Programme of that year. Sardar Vallabhbhai was the first President of the G.P.C.C. and I had the privilege of being the first Secretary along with my friends Mr. Indulal Yajnik. While Vallabhbhai was the Chairman of the Reception Committee of the 36th Congress Ahmedabad, I was the General Secretary thereof and our identification with Gandhiji was complete. The Municipal fight in those days on the question of Education and the subsequent history of the Ahmedabad Municipality are a fascinating subject for any student of Local Bodies, who wishes to study and appraise the potentialities of these bodies for effective contributions in the advancement of the national cause, provided the city-fathers are fired with a spirit of selfless service and sacrifice.

His other activities outside the Municipality from 1921 onwards are well-known to the public and I need not detail them. The Nagpur Flag Satyagraha of 1922, his presidentship of the Congress, the Bardoli struggle of 1928, the C.D.O. struggle of 1930-31, 1932-34, 1940-41 and 1942-45, his work as a member of the Congress Working Committee and Parliamentary Board, etc., are fresh in the public mind. His statesmanship in the Constituent Assembly and his handling of the States problem, his firm and wide awake regime as the Home Minister during the times through which we have been passing is yet current politics. They have lent us confidence and cohesion when we were in dire need of these. His great qualities as an administrator, organiser, a fighter stand today as a rock in a stormy sea.

But this picture of Vallabhbhai would be incomplete and onesided, if I were not just to touch a few personal aspects. He is a loving friend and possesses the rare quality of loyalty to colleagues and friends in all circumstances and situations. He has a very soft and tender heart, which, being perhaps concealed under the stern and apparently selfcontained

looks, with silence or few of pungent and incisive words, is not seen by those who have not the privilege of close association. Notwithstanding his exceptional shrewdness and sound judgment about men and matters, he is simple and trusting, almost like a child, in the case of those whom he considers worthy of his confidence. To stand by a friend is always a point of honour with him. Having a strong mind combined with sentiment, his likes and dislikes are also strong, sometime strong to a fault, but the greatest merit is that he never has any personal motive or axe to grind—not even obliging a friend or hurting a foe. He measures everything and moulds his attitude and conduct to achieve what he considers to be the best interests of the country. His wit and humour are absolutely his own so much so that in his company you feel happy even under the most adverse situations.

In the difficult days ahead, he inspires us with confidence. Nothing very far wrong can go with the Country so long as we have Vallabhbhai with us. May Almighty bless us with long life and health for the Sardar.



THIRTY FIFTH SESSION—Amritsar, 1919

President: Pandit Motilal Nehru

Chairman of the Reception Committee:

Swami Shradhanand.

General Secretaries: V. J. Patel, M. A. Ansari and Pandit Gokaran Nath Misra. *Delegates*: 7031.



President

Born 1861. Brilliant lawyer. Attended a few early sessions of the Congress and proposed Dr. Rash Behari Ghose for Presidentship of Surat Congress, 1907. President, U. P. Provincial Conference, 1918. Services in the Punjab. Came under the influence of Gandhiji. President Indian National Congress, Amritsar, 1919. Gave up his extensive practice as leading non-co-operator. Organised boycott of Prince of Wales. Arrested and sentenced to 6 months, 1921. Joined C. R. Das and founded Swaraj Party, 1922. Elected to the Central Assembly, 1923. Leader of the opposition. Gandhi Das Nehru Pact, 1924. Leader of Swaraj Party after death of Das, 1925. Re-elected to Central Assembly in General Election, 1926. Trip to Europe, 1927. President of Committee to draft constitution for India, 1928. Organised the boycott of the Simon Commission. President, Indian National Congress, Calcutta, 1928. Acting President of the Congress, April, 1930. Leader Salt Satyagraha. Arrested and sentenced to 6 months in June. Gift of "Anand Bhavan" to Congress. Released in September. Died February, 1931.

Details of the Session

Met in great enthusiasm after Jalianwalla. Attended by Lokamanya, Ali Brothers, Malavyaji. Main resolution moved by Deshbandhu Das was for rejecting the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms as inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing. Gandhiji moved amendment for co-operation. A compromise formula evolved thanking Montague and to so work the reforms as to secure an early establishment of full responsible Government. Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford was impeached and his recall demanded. Condemnation of mob violence in Punjab. Endorsed the boycott of the Hunter Commission. Protested against hostile attitude of British Ministers towards Khilafat issue. Lokamanya, Lalaji and Andrews thanked for services. Congratulated Sankaran Nair on resignation. Horniman's deportation condemned. Resolution on Fundamental Rights. Call for investigation of Land Revenue System, Labour conditions and the woes of third class passengers. Resolutions on Swadeshi, prohibition of export of milch cows and stud bulls and the liquor policy of the provinces. Pleaded for repeal of Press Act and Rowlatt Act.

Events of the Year

Khilafat deputation to the Viceroy headed by Dr. Ansari. Viceroy's reply disappointing. Third Khilafat Conference, Bombay, February. Muslim deputation to England headed by Maulana Mohamed Ali in March. Khilafat day 19th March. Gandhiji accepts the presidentship of the All India Home Rule League. Lokamanya issues manifesto of Congress Democratic Party. Proposed peace terms with Turkey published 14th May. Hunter Committee report published simultaneously. Khilafat Committee at Bombay adopts Gandhiji's non-co-operation project, 20th May. All India Congress Committee at Benares. Decides on a special session of Congress. Conference of leaders at Allahabad, 2nd June. Approves Non-co-operation. Muslims Hijrat movement. Death of Lokamanya, 30 July. Non-co-operation formally inaugurated, 1st August. Provincial Congress Committees give overwhelming support for non-co-operation.



MAHATMA GANDHI

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Gyan Publishing House



PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

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Bharat Photostat Studio

THIRTY SIXTH SESSION—Calcutta, 1920.

President: Lala Lajpat Rai.

Chairman of the Reception Committee:

B. Chakravarti.

General Secretaries: V. J. Patel, M. A. Ansari and Pandit Gokaran Nath Misr.



President

Born 1865. Joined the legal profession and established extensive practice at Lahore. Early in life came under the influence of Dayanand Saraswati and for years engaged in Arya Samaj activities. Helped in founding D. A. V. College and other institutions. Visited England in 1895 as a delegate of the Congress. Chief extremist leader with Lokamanya and Bepin Chadra Pal. Arrested in 1907 and deported to Mandalay but was released after 6 months. Thereafter became foremost leader of the Punjab. Went to America during the war but had to stay there till 1919 as his passport was withheld. Published 'Young India', banned in India and England. President, Special session of the Congress at Calcutta in August, 1920. President, Indian Trade Union Congress. In 1921 and 1922 underwent two terms of imprisonment. Elected to the Central Legislative Assembly in 1923 as a Swarajist but later formed the Nationalist Party and successfully contested the 1926 election. Author of many books. Moved the resolution on boycott of the Simon Commission in the Assembly. Led the boycott demonstration at Lahore on the 30th October, 1926. Assaulted by police. He said, "Every blow aimed at me is a nail struck in the coffin of British Imperialism in India." The injuries hastened his death. A trust of his properties for Servant of People Society formed, Library and Hospital. Died 1928.

Details of the Session

Mourned the death of Lokamanya Tilak and Dr. Mahendranath. Expressed concurrence with the findings of the Punjab Enquiry Committee. Declared that the Majority report of the Hunter Committee was tainted by bias and race prejudice and that the report was unacceptable and unreliable. Condemned British cabinet's apathy towards Punjab atrocities and declared it has shaken all confidence of the people of India in British justice. Main resolution was the non-co-operation resolution advocating surrender of titles, refusal to attend Government functions, boycott of Schools, Law courts and Legislatures, boycott of foreign goods and councils moved by Gandhiji. Bepin Chandra Pal moved amendment to send deputation to British Premier. C. R. Das supported amendment. Hotly debated. Most well known Congress leaders like Lajpat Rai and Khaparde supported by Pandit Motilal Nehru and Ali brothers opposed resolution. Resolution carried by 1886 votes to 884. Calcutta session for the first time put Gandhiji as the accredited leader of the nation.

THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION—Nagpur, 1920

President: C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

Chairman of the Reception Committee:

Seth Jamnalal Bajaj

General Secretaries:

Motilal Nehru, C. Rajagopalachariar and M.A. Ansari.

Delegates: 14,583



President: Born 1852. Associated with the Congress from its very inception. Member of the Committee to draw up the Congress constitution 1887. Member of the Madras Legislative Council 1885-1901. Member of the Indian Congress Committee 1899-1900. President, Madras Provincial conference, Calicut 1900. Collection work for "India" 1901-1902. Actively participated in Benares Congress 1905. Spoke in Calcutta Congress. Stood aloof from Congress since Surat split in sympathy with the extremists. Member, Imperial Legislative Council 1913-1916. Reappeared in the Congress after Lucknow session 1916. Took active part in the special session held at Bombay 1918 and in the session at Amritsar 1919. President, Special Provincial Conference Madras 1918. President Indian National Congress, Nagpur 1920. Did not agree with non-co-operation. Later, supported the Hindu Mahasabha and presided over one session. A staunch nationalist to the end of his life. Died 1943.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

Reaffirmed the non-co-operation resolution of Calcutta. An All India Tilak Swaraj fund started. Boycott of Duke of Connaught. Congress creed changed to the attainment of Swaraj by peaceful and legitimate means. Provinces regrouped on linguistic basis. A. I. C. C. membership raised to 350. Working Committee of 15 appointed. Homage to Martyr Mac Swiney, the Irish hunger striker. Support to Indian overseas in their struggle. Condemned export of food stuffs and Reverse Councils Loot.

EVENTS OF THE YEAR

Non-co-operation at its height. Wide response to the triple boycott. National colleges and Universities spring up throughout the country. Seth Jamnalal Bajaj gives Rs. One lakh to Tilak Swaraj Fund. Working Committee authorises Deshabandhu Das to look after labour organisation. Nankana tragedy resulting in 195 deaths, March. A. I. C. C. at Bezwada decides on collecting Rs. One crore for Tilak Swaraj Fund, enlisting one crore of members and introducing twenty lakhs of charkhas. Restraint Orders on Das, Yakub Hasan, Lalaji, Rajen Babu and others. Gandhiji's interview with the Viceroy. By July, Swaraj fund over-subscribed by 15 lakhs. A. I. C. C. Bombay in July decides on boycott of Prince of Wales. Moplah Rebellion in Malabar. Khilafat conference at Karachi, July. President Mahomad Ali's fatwa against Muslims serving in army. Ali Bros. arrested. Karachi Trial. Chirala Satyagraha. Martial Law in Malabar. Prince of Wales arrives in Bombay 17th November. Rioting in Bombay. Wholesale arrests. Over 40,000 in jail. Volunteer organisations declared illegal. President—elect of Congress, Das arrested fortnight before session.

THIRTYEIGHTH SESSION—Ahmedabad 1921

President: HAKIM AJMALKHAN (*President-elect* C. R. DAS was in Jail)

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Vallabhbhai Patel

General Secretaries: Motilal Nehru, C. Rajagopalachariar, V. J. Patel and A. Rangaswami Iyenger.

Delegates: 4,726



President: Born 1865. Belonged to a family of reputed Hakims. Muslim Scholar and Divine. Took to medicine and became the leading Unani physician in Delhi. Went on an extensive pilgrimage in the Middle East 1904. Visited Europe in 1911. Visited the leading Hospitals of England and the Continent. Wrote several treatises on medicine. Member of the Muslim League and later Vice-President. Chairman of the Reception Committee, Indian National Congress, Delhi 1918. Came under the influence of Gandhiji. A prominent non-co-operator and Khilafatist. C. R. Das, President-elect of Ahmedabad Congress being in jail, was unanimously elected in his place. Presided over the Congress at Ahmedabad, 1921 with great ability. President, Civil Disobedience Committee, 1922. Participated in the Unity Conference 1924. Foremost exponent of Hindu-Muslim Unity. Member of the Working Committee of the Congress till death. Trip to Europe for reasons of health 1925. Died 1927.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

Main resolution was really a thesis on non-co-operation, its philosophy and programme alike. The pledge for volunteers included. Gandhiji was appointed as the sole executive authority of the Congress and invested with the full powers of the A. I. C. C. and also the power to nominate a successor. Maulana Hasrat Mohani proposed to define Swaraj in the Congress creed as Complete Independence. Gandhiji opposed it and the resolution was thrown out. Public support was requested for hand-spinning and hand weaving, communal unity, total prohibition and eradication of untouchability. Declared that the non-co-operation or Khilafat movement had nothing whatsoever to do with Moplah rebellion. Expressed horror at the Podanur train tragedy. Congratulated Kemal Pasha on his victories over the Greeks. Felicitated Baba Gurdit Singh of Komagatamaru.

EVENTS OF THE YEAR

All Parties' Conference at Bombay. Passed resolution condemning the repressive policy of the Government and asking for the withdrawal of all special laws, the release of all political prisoners and the convening of a Round Table Conference. Viceroy's "No". Gandhiji intimates Viceroy, 1st February, his intention to start Civil Disobedience in Bardoli. Guntur declares no-tax. Military quartered. Andhra sanctions no-tax campaign. Government's Communique. 21 Constables and a Sub-Inspector burnt alive at Chauri Chaura by a mob, 5th February. Working Committee at Bardoli 12th February, suspends Civil Disobedience and advocates constructive programme. A. I. C. C. at Delhi on the 24th and 25th February endorses Bardoli decisions. Gandhiji arrested, 13th March. Sentenced to 6 years. A. I. C. C. at Lucknow in June appoints Civil Disobedience Committee. Severe repression in Andhra. Lloyd George's "Steel Frame" speech. Borsad satyagraha. Akali movement. C. D. Committee divided on council entry. A. I. C. C. at Calcutta postpones discussion of council entry to Gaya Congress.

THIRTYNINTH SESSION—Gaya 1922

President: Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das

Chairman of the Reception Committee:

Brij Kishore Prasad.

General Secretaries: Moazzam Ali, Vallabhbhai Patel, and Rajendra Prasad. *Delegates:* 3248.



President

Born 1870. Educated in Calcutta and England. Enrolled as a barrister, 1903. Appeared in many sensational cases (1907-11) like the Manicktolla Bomb case, Dacca Conspiracy case and the Munitions Board case. Member of the Congress Punjab Enquiry Committee. Advocated obstruction at the Amritsar Congress, 1919. Opposed non-co-operation at the Calcutta special session but accepted it at Nagpur in 1920. Suspended his immense practice of £50,000 a year. Organised the boycott of the Prince of Wales. Elected President of the Ahmedabad Congress, 1921, but arrested 15 days before the session. Sentenced to 6 months' imprisonment. In 1922, presided over the Congress at Gaya and founded the Swaraj Party. In 1923 the Swarajists entered the Councils but Das refused to form a ministry in Bengal. Presided over the All-India Trade Union Congress at Lahore. In 1924 captured the Calcutta Corporation and became the first Mayor. Gandhi-Das-Nehru Pact. Satyagraha at Tarakeswar. Presided again over the All India Trade Union Congress. Reading-Birkenhead-Das pourparlers in 1925. Made over his entire property to a trust for the service of the country. Died at Darjeeling 1925.

Details of the Session

Main resolution of the session was on Council entry. Rajaji led the No-changers and Das led the Swarajists. Jamiat-ul-ulema had issued a fatwa declaring Council entry as Mamnoon and not Haram. Declared by a large majority to continue the boycott of councils. Deshabandhu Das resigns Presidentship. The nation was called upon to get ready men and money for mass Civil Disobedience. Solemn warning to Government not to incur any more national debts. Appealed to the public not to contribute to any further loans floated by the Government. Congratulated the Akalis on their unexampled bravery and their spirit of non-violence. Congratulated Kemal Pasha.

Events of the Year

Political atmosphere vitiated by communal riots. A. I. C. C. considers President's resignation. Compromise on Council progaganda thanks to Maulana Azad. Assembly throws out Salt Tax. Viceroy certifies. Nochangers resign from Working Committee. Das' resignation accepted at Bombay A. I. C. C. Dr. Ansari becomes Acting President. Flag Satyagraha in Nagpur continues. Tamilnad Committee refuses to obey compromise. Working Committee resigns. A special session decided on. Hartal and demonstrations against all Imperial functions as protest against treatment of Indians overseas. The Special Session permits Council entry. General elections to Legislatures. Swarajists sweep the polls in Bengal and C. P. Many liberals like Surendranath Banerjee defeated. In the Central Assembly, the Swarajists capture 48 seats. The Akali struggle continues. Maharaja of Nabha forced to abdicate.

FORTIETH SESSION—Delhi, 1923

President: Maulana Abul Kalam Azad

Chairman of the Reception Committee:

Dr. M. A. Ansari.

General Secretaries: Moazzam Ali, Vallabhbhai Patel and Rajendra Prasad.



President

Born in Mecca 1888, and passed childhood in Arabia. Educated at the Al Azhar University, Cairo. After coming to India, settled in Calcutta. Started an Urdu weekly Al Hilal. Suppressed by the Government. Started Al Balagh. Arrested and interned along with the Ali brothers. After release, joined the Congress under the leadership of Gandhiji. Leading Khilafatist and pre-eminent non-co-operator. Imprisoned along with Deshabandhu Das 1921-1922. President, Special Session of the Indian National Congress at Delhi, 1923. Suffered imprisonment several times in connection with the Salt Satyagraha and the Civil Disobedience Movement 1932. Acting Congress President, 1930. Member of the Working Committee for over two decades. President Indian National Congress Ramgarh 1940, and continued upto 1946. Leading Muslim Divine, scholar, powerful writer and orator. Arrested on the 9th August 1942 and detained in the Ahmednagar Fort. Minister for education in Interim Government, and Indian Dominion, 1947.

Details of the Session

Permitted such congressmen "as have no religious or conscientious objection against council entry" to enter legislatures. All propaganda against council entry suspended. Redoubled efforts to be put forth on behalf of constructive programme. Boycott of Foreign cloth through Khaddar urged. Urged the formation of Civic Guards and promotion of physical culture. Committee to determine the most feasible methods of encouraging Indian industries. Committee appointed to revise the constitution. Committee appointed to prepare a draft of the National Pact. Nagpur Flag Satyagraha congratulated on its successful finish. Press warned to observe great restraint in dealing with communal matters. Condemned the forced abdication of Maharajah of Nabha. Sympathy for sufferers of earthquake in Japan and floods in Bihar, Kanara and Burma. Released prisoners notably Lala Lajpat Rai and Maulana Mahomed Ali welcomed. Kenya, the subject of indignation.

FORTY-FIRST SESSION—Coconada, 1923

President: Maulana Mohammad Ali

Chairman of the Reception Committee:

Deshabhakta Konda Venkatappayya

General Secretaries: Dr. S. D. Kitchlew, Gangadhar Rao Deshpande, Jawaharlal Nehru, and D. Gopalkrishnayya. *Delegates*: 6,188



President

Born 1878. Educated at Aligarh and Oxford. On return from England, was for sometime in the service of the Nawab of Rampur and also of the Baroda State. In 1907 took to journalism and

established and edited the Comrade, an English Weekly published first at Calcutta and later at Delhi. Pamphlet "Come into Macedonia and help us" forfeited, 1914. Interned on the outbreak of the war, October, 1914. Released, 1919 and attended Amritsar Congress. Became leader of the Khilafat movement and ardent follower of Gandhiji. Led a Khilafat deputation to England, 1920. Member, Working Committee of the Congress. President, All India Khilafat Conference, Karachi, 1921. Declared it unlawful for Muslims to serve in the army. Arrested at Waltair in September, 1921, and sentenced at Karachi to 2 years. President, Indian National Congress, Cocanada, 1923. Associated with the Unity Conference, 1924. Opposed the Nehru Report on the independence issue and communal settlement. Drifted away from the Congress. Delegate to the first Round Table Conference. Died in England, 1931.

Details of the Session

Condemned the continued incarceration of Savarkar. National Pact to be circulated along with the Bengal Pact prepared by Deshbandhu Das. Formation of an All India Volunteer organisation. A scheme of separate Congress departments was called for, as also a scheme of a National Service of paid workers to work these various departments. Wholehearted sympathy with Kenya Indians and George Joseph and Sarojini Naidu deputed as delegates to the Kenya Indian Congress. Committee appointed to enquire into conditions of Indian Labour in Ceylon. Resolved to stand by the Sikhs as Government action in attacking Akali Dal was a challenge to right of free asociation. Civil Disobedience and Satyagraha Committees absorbed into the Working Committee. Emigration from India was advised to be stopped.

Events of the Year

Gandhiji's sudden illness with appendicitis. Operation by Col. Maddock. Released 5th February. Swarajist triumph in the legislatures. Dyarchy killed in Bengal and C.P. Supplies thrown out in the Central Assembly. The Akali movement stronger. Murder of Earnest Day in the streets of Calcutta. The Dinajpur Resolution on Gopinath Saha. Juhu conversations between Gandhiji, Das and Nehru. A. I. C. C. at Ahmedabad in June. 2,000 yards of yarn decided as Congress franchise. Gopinath Saha resolution. Renewed repression in Bengal followed by the arrest of Subhas Bose and other eminent Congressmen. Communal riots all over the country. Gandhiji fasts for 21 days. The Unity Conference at Delhi, attended by the Metropolitan of Calcutta, September. A Central National Panchayat created. Satyagraha at Tarakeswar. The threat of the arrest of Deshbandhu Das. The all Parties Conference at Bombay, with infructuous deliberation.

FORTY-SECOND SESSION—Belgaum, 1924

President: Mahatma Gandhi

Chairman of the Reception Committee:

Gangadhar Rao Deshpande

General Secretaries: Shaib Qureshi, B. F. Bharucha and Jawaharlal Nehru. *Delegates*: 1,844



President

Born 2nd October, 1869. Barrister at Bombay and later South Africa. Led an Indian Ambulance Corps during Boer War and Zulu Revolt. Satyagraha in South Africa and the Gandhi-Smuts agreement. Kaira Satyagraha and the Champaran Agitation. Became undisputed leader of Congress after 1920. Inaugurated and led the Khilafat and Non-co-operation movements, 1920-22. Arrested and sentenced to six years imprisonment, March, 1922. Released 4th February, 1924. 21 days fast for communal

unity. President, Indian National Congress Belgaum, 1924. Devoted the next 6 years to constructive programme. Inaugurated the Salt Satyagraha, April, 1930. Imprisoned, January, 1932. Fast unto death against Communal Award. Award modified. Released, 1933. Formed Harijan Sevak Sangh. Retired from Congress, 1934 but remains undisputed leader and adviser of the Congress. Worked for Bihar Earthquake Relief. Rajkot imbroglio and fast 1939. Inaugurated Individual Civil Disobedience, 1940. Formulated Quit India move, 1942. Arrested and detained, 9th August, 1942. 21 days fast in February, 1943. Life partner Kasturba died in detention, February, 1944. Released, May, 1944. Gandhi-Jinnah pourpalers. Toured Noakhali and Bihar for Riot Relief. Opposed to partition scheme but advised country to agree to Mountbatten plan. Stems communal riots in Calcutta and later at Delhi. Acclaimed as greatest man of the age.

Details of the Session

Gandhi-Das-Nehru agreement passed by the A. I. C. C. in November was ratified. The Congress franchise was likewise altered. Resolutions on untouchability and Vaikom Satyagraha. The Akali movement, drink and opium traffic dealt with by suitable resolutions. The exodus of Hindus from Kohat was deplored and the Muslims of Kohat were exhorted to assure their Hindu brethren of full protection of lives and property and the Hindu refugees were advised not to return except upon the invitation of the Kohat Muslims. Sympathy expressed for the sufferers in Gulbarga in Nizam's dominions. Indians abroad, the subject of a suitable resolution. Services of Sarojini Naidu, Vaze and Benarasidas Chaturvedi appreciated. Certain alterations in Congress constitution were effected.

Events of the Year

Swarajist climb down in the Central Assembly. No more "constant, continuous, uniform obstruction." Gandhiji tours South India. Vaikom Satyagraha ends. Gandhiji's pact with Travancore authorities. Faridpur Provincial Conference. Deshabandhu's offer of co-operation, Lord Reading's visit to England. Das dies 16th June. Death of Surendranath Banerjee, 6th August. Deshabandhu Memorial. Motilal Nehru accepts seat on the Skeen Committee. Muddiman Committee Report published. Pandit Motilal's motion in Central Assembly for Round Table Conference carried. Dr. Suhrawardy resigns from Swaraj Party. Vithalbhai Patel elected President of the Assembly. Swarajist dissensions in Bengal. A. I. C. C. meeting at Patna, 21st September. Yarn franchise an alternative to four anna membership. Political work made over to the Swarajists. Kelkar, Moonjee, Jayakar and Khaparde declare for Responsive Co-operation. Resign from Swaraj Party. Communal riots throughout the year. The Akali agitation ends.

FORTY-THIRD SESSION—Cawnpore, 1925

President: Mrs. Sarojini Naidu

Chairman of the Reception Committee:

Dr. Murli Lal

General Secretaries: M. A. Ansari, A. Rangaswami Iyengar and Pandit Santanam. *Delegates*: 2,688



President

Born 1879. Educated at Hyderabad and Cambridge. Published three volumes of poetry in England which have been translated into many languages. Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 1914. Herself a Bengali Brahmin, she married a

Madrasi non-Brahmin. Joined the Indian National Congress, 1915. Went to England in 1920 and did propaganda. Returned Kaiser-i-Hind medal to Government. Member, Working Committee of the Congress. Visited East Africa and Kenya. Work appreciated by Congress. President, Indian National Congress, Cawnpore, 1925. Toured and lectured America in 1928. Participated in the Salt Satyagraha and was jailed. Delegate to the Second Round Table Conference, 1931. Acting President of the Congress, 1932. Jailed again. Connected with the Women's movement. Offered Satyagraha in the individual Civil Disobedience Movement. Was arrested but released prematurely due to bad health. Arrested again on the 9th August, 1942 and detained with Gandhiji at Aga Khan Palace. Nursed Gandhiji during famous fast in 1943. Released soon after on grounds of health. Chairman, Asian Relations Conference Delhi, 1947 and member Constituent Assembly. Acting Governor U. P., 1947.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

Received South African delegation. Declared the Area Reservation and Immigration Registration Bill to be a breach of Gandhi Smuts Agreement, 1914 and suggested a Round Table Conference to arbitrate. Bengal ordinance condemned. Expulsion of non-Burman offenders Bill and the Tax on Sea-Passengers Bill of Burma condemned. Faith in Civil Disobedience reiterated. Adopted a detailed constructive programme. Endorsed the Swaraj Party's demands and called on the Swarajists to walk out of the Councils if their demands were not accepted. Hindustani prescribed as the language of the Congress. Foreign department of A. I. C. C. to be opened.

EVENTS OF THE YEAR

Conciliatory speech of Lord Reading in opening the Assembly. The A. I. C. C. meeting at Delhi. Cawnpore Congress decision confirmed. Funds sanctioned for Seva Dal and foreign propaganda. Public debate between Pandit Motilal and Lala Lajpat Rai in the Assembly. Indian National Party formed at Bombay. Compromise meeting between Swarajists and Responsivists at Sabarmati, April. The Sabarmati Pact. Prakasam repudiates the pact. A. I. C. C. at Ahmedabad repudiates Sabarmati Pact. Motilal leaves for England. Sriman Srinivasa Iyengar becomes leader in his place. Fierce Hindu Muslim riots in Calcutta for 6 weeks. Hilton Young Commission reports on Currency and Exchange published, August. General Elections in November. In Tamil Nad and Andhra, Congress captures all elective seats to Central Assembly. Congress reverses in U. P. Congress squabbles in Bengal. Swami Shraddhanand murdered by a Muslim.

FORTY-FOURTH SESSION—Gauhati, 1926

President: S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

Chairman of the Reception Committee:

T. R. Phookun

General Secretaries: Dr. M. A. Ansari, A. Rangaswami Iyengar, Pandit Santanam and V. J. Patel

Delegates: 3,000



PRESIDENT

Born 1874. Practices law and soon becomes the leader of the bar. Later Advocate General of Madras. Member of the Madras Senate, 1912-1916. President of the Madras Social Reform Association, 1916-1920. Advocate General, 1916-1920. Returned his C.I.E. and resigned his membership of the Council in 1921. President, Tamil Nad Provincial Congress Committee. Elected to the Central Assembly. Elected President of the Indian National Congress, Gauhati, 1926. Elected Deputy leader of the Opposition in the Central Assembly. Member of the Working Committee of the Congress for a number of years. Took leading part in the demon-



ABDUL GAFFUR KHAN

Nandalal Bose

strations against the Simon Commission. Started the Independence of India League and fought the Nehru Report on the question of Independence. Withdrew from public life in 1930. Died, 1941.

Details of the Session

Main resolution was on work in Councils. Congressmen were to refuse ministerships or other offices until a satisfactory response was made by the Government to the Nationalist Demand. They were to refuse supplies and throw out budgets and all proposals for legislative enactments by which the bureaucracy proposed to consolidate its powers. But allowed to move resolutions and introduce and support measures and bills necessary for the healthy growth of national life and the advancement of the country's interests and for the protection of Civil liberties and the consequent displacement of the bureaucracy. Tributes paid to memory of Swami Shradhdhananda by Gandhiji and Maulana Mahomed Ali. Condemned the discrimination against Indian settlers in Kenya. Emergency legislation for dealing with Bengal detenues was condemned. Resolutions on Hindu Muslim Unity, Gurudwara prisoners and Bengal detenues.

Events of the Year

Swarajist-Nationalist combine in the Central Assembly. The entire grant of the budget thrown out. Government wins by narrow margin on the exchange issue. The South African Indian question settled and the Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastry sent as Indian Agent to South Africa. A. I. C. C. at Bombay attempts solution of communal problem. Subhas Bose released after four years' imprisonment. Serious communal riots. Unity Conference sponsored by Congress, Bombay, 27th October. Srinivasa Iyengar presides. Communal formula. Viceroy invites leading politicians, 5th November. Gandhiji also sees Viceroy. Simon Commission announced. Condemned by every party as an eye wash. All Parties Manifesto against Simon Commission.

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION—Madras, 1927

President: Dr. M. A. Ansari

Chairman of the Reception Committee:

C. M. Muthuramaga Mudaliyar

General Secretaries: Shaib Quereshi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose

Delegates: 2,694



President

Born in 1880. Educated at Allahabad and Deccan. Joined the Edinburgh University in 1901. House Surgeon, Charing Cross Hospital. Resident Medical Officer, Lock Hospital and Clinical Assistant St. Peter's Hospital, London. Returns after ten years stay in Europe. Organised the All India Medical Mission to Turkey in 1912-1913. Took a leading part in the Home Rule Agitation, 1917-1918. Elected President All India Muslim League, 1920. Active leader of the Khilafat and Non-co-operation movement. President, Khilafat Conference, Gaya, 1922. President, Indian National Congress, Madras, 1927. Participated in the Salt Satyagraha and the Civil Disobedience Movement and was imprisoned. Founder President, Congress Parliamentary Party, 1933. Largely responsible for Congress accepting the parliamentary programme. Retired from active politics due to bad health in April, 1935. Died 1936.

Details of the Session

Main resolution resolved to boycott the Simon Commission "at each stage and in every form". Creed of the Congress defined in a separate resolution that "the goal of the Indian people is complete National Independence". Even Mrs. Beasant supported the Independence resolution. Working Committee authorised to coopt and to confer with other

bodies and draft a constitution and place it before a special convention for approval. War danger sounded in a resolution. Declared it would be duty of the people to refuse to take any part in any Imperialist war or to co-operate with the Government in any way. Congratulated General Avari of Arms Act Satyagraga on his hunger strike. Condemned the proposed separation of Burma from India. Demanded release of detenues. Resolutions on League against Imperialism, China, refusal of passports, boycott of British goods, Hindu Mnslim unity, Indians in Africa and lawless laws.

Events of the Year

Simon Commission arrives in Bombay, 3rd February. Nationwide hartal. Shooting in Madras. Student-Police clash in Celcutta. Simon's letter to Viceroy, 7th February, proposing an Indian Committee of seven members to co-operate. Lala Lajpat Rai moves Simon Boycott resolution in Assembly. Motion carried. At Bombay boycott of Simon Commission by noted knights. All Parties Conference at Delhi appoints committee under Presidentship of Motilal Nehru to draft constitution. Bardoli Satyagraha under the lead of Vallabhbhai Patel. It ends in success. Bloomfield enquiry. Nehru Committee present its report. Public Safety Bill introduced in the Assembly but thrown out by casting vote of President. Bomb in the Central Assembly thrown by Bhagat Singh. The Independence of India League started by Srinivasa Iyengar. Lathi charge on Lalaji at Lahore. Lalaji dies as a resnlt of injuries. Mr. Saunders, Superintendent of Police shot dead in Lahore. Youth movement gathers momentum. Arrests all over the country.

FORTY-SIXTH SESSION—Calcutta, 1928

President: Pandit Motilal Nehru

Chairman of the Reception Committee:

J. M. Sen Gupta

General Secretaries: M. A. Ansari and Jawaharlal Nehru. *Delegates*: 5,221

Details of the Session

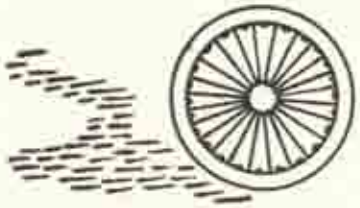
Main resolution was on Nehru Report. Gandhiji moved a resolution accepting Nehru Report's recommendation of Dominion Status for two years. Jawaharlal moved an amendment reiterating adherence to independence. Compromise formula evolved. Ultimatum to British Government to accept the Nehru Report within one year or the Congress would launch satyagrah. Propaganda for independence to continue. Detailed programme of work for the year issued. Reciprocated greetings from friends in foreign countries. Contemplated a Pan-Asiatic Federation. Reiterated Madras resolution on War danger. Congratulations to Vallabhbhai Patel on the success of the Bardoli Satyagraha. Demand for responsible Government in Indian States. Resolutions on police raids and searches in Lahore, Boycott of British goods, League against Imperialism etc. Mass rally of 50,000 labour workers in Congress Pandal who saluted the national flag and supported Independence.

Events of the Year

Sub-Committee appointed to give effect to the Congress programme. Gandhiji arrested at Calcutta in March and fined Re. 1/- for burning foreign cloth. Gandhiji's tour of Burma and Andhra Desa. Arrests in Bombay, Punjab and U. P. Later culminating in the Meerut Conspiracy case. President Patel rules out the Public Safety Bill as owing to Meerut Case, the matter was sub judice. Bombay meeting of the A. I. C. C. Proposals for Congress reorganisation. Shiv Prasad Gupta to represent India at the Congress of League against Imperialism. Resolved to make revolutionary changes in the present economic and social structure of society. Bhagat Singh and Dutt sentenced to transportation for life. Strike in Bombay Mills and in Jute industry in Bengal. Hunger strike of Lahore Conspiracy prisoners and martyrdom of Jatindranath Das. Lahore Conspiracy Trial Ordinance. Martyrdom of Phongy Wizaya. Lord Irwin's talks with leaders. Viceregal train bombed.

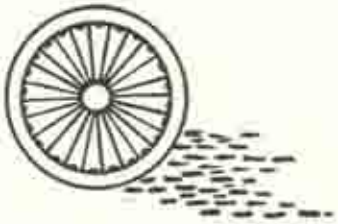
BOOK V

SATYAGRAHA ERA



CHAPTER XXII

INDEPENDENCE AND SALT SATYAGRAHA



INDEPENDENCE GOAL

THE Congress at Calcutta had given ultimatum to the British Government. Dominion Status was to be conceded by December 31st, 1929. Otherwise complete independence was to be the goal of the Congress. The year of 1929 had been a year of waiting. The Congress met at Lahore on the banks of the Ravi in an atmosphere of revolutionary fervour and expectations. At midnight on December 31st, as the new year was ushered in, the flag of Purna Swaraj was unfurled. Complete independence was adopted as the goal and the A. I. C. C. was authorised "whenever it deems fit to launch upon a programme of Civil Disobedience including non-payment of taxes."

INDEPENDENCE PLEDGE

On January 26, 1930 was celebrated all over India the first independence day, when in towns and villages all over the country, huge mass meetings of men and women read the Declaration :

"We believe that it is the inalienable right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom and to enjoy the fruits of their toil and have necessities of life, so that they may have full opportunities of growth. We believe also that if any Government deprives a people of these rights and oppresses them, the people have a further right to alter it or to abolish it. The British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but has based itself on the exploitation of the masses, and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually. We believe therefore that India must sever the British connection and attain Purna Swaraj or Complete Independence.

"India has been ruined economically. The revenue derived from our people is out of all proportion to our income. Our average income is seven pice (less than two pence) per day, and of the heavy taxes we pay 20% are raised from the Land Revenue derived from the peasantry, and 3% from the Salt Tax, which falls most heavily on the poor.

"Villages industries, such as hand-spinning, have been destroyed, leaving the peasantry idle for at least four months in the year, and dulling their intellect for want of handicrafts, and nothing has been substituted, as in other countries, for the crafts thus destroyed.

"Customs and currency have been so manipulated as to heap further burdens on the peasantry. British manufactured goods constitute the bulk of our imports. Customs duties betray clear partiality for British manufactures, and revenue from them is used not to lessen the burden on the masses but for sustaining a highly extravagant administration. Still more arbitrary has been the manipulation of exchange ratio which has resulted in millions being drained away from the country.

"Politically, India's status has never been so reduced as under the British regime. No reforms have given real political power to the people. The tallest of us have to bend before foreign authority. The rights of free expression of opinion and free association have been denied to us, and many of our countrymen are compelled to live in exile abroad and cannot return to their homes. All administrative talent is killed and the masses have to be satisfied with petty village offices and clerkships.

"Culturally, the system of education has torn us from our moorings and our training has made us hug the very chains that bind us.

"Spiritually, compulsory disarmament has made us unmanly and the presence of an alien army of occupation, employed with deadly effect to crush in us the spirit of resistance, has made us think that we cannot look after ourselves or put up a defence against foreign aggression, or even defend our homes and families from the attacks of thieves, robbers and miscreants.

"We hold it to be a crime against man and God to submit any longer to a rule that has caused this four-fold disaster to our country. We recognise, however, that the most effective way of gaining our freedom is not through violence. We will, therefore, prepare ourselves by withdrawing, so far as we can, all voluntary association from the British Government, and will prepare for Civil Disobedience, including non-payment of taxes. We are convinced that if we can but withdraw our voluntary help and stop payment of taxes without doing violence, even under provocation the end of this inhuman rule is assured. We, therefore, hereby solemnly resolve to carry out the Congress instructions issued from time to time for the purpose of establishing Purna Swaraj."

Independence day celebrations revealed the pent up feelings, enthusiasm and readiness of the people for sacrifice. The smouldering fire was to be rekindled and a mighty effort made against the world's mightiest empire by a new popular upsurge even though without the use of arms. At this time arrests and prosecutions had already begun all over the country. In the Meerut Conspiracy case, started in the previous year, of the 32 accused, all but one had been committed to Sessions. Subhas was already in Jail. The Working Committee met in February at Sabarmathi and authorised Gandhiji and his followers-in-faith to start Civil Disobedience and the A. I. C. C. shortly after endorsed this decision.

Gandhiji's 11 Points

It was not yet clear what would be the programme of action. Gandhiji's strategy was not clear even to his closest associates. But the country had unbounded faith in Gandhiji's leadership. Earlier he had made his 11-point demand on the Viceroy and had offered inspite of everything that had happened, to call off Civil Disobedience. These points included total prohibition, reduction of Rupee ratio to 1*s.* 4*d.*, reduction of Land Revenue by half, reduction of all Military expenditure by half, protective Tariff on foreign cloth, relaxation of the Arms Act for self-defence and abolition of Salt Tax.

Salt Satyagraha

It soon became known that Salt Tax was to be chosen for direct action campaign. This, when it started, appeared fantastic and ridiculous to the Moderates and the Government. But soon the country was ablaze with the mighty movement that is remembered with pride. "In it one might have said, the progress of a thousand years was encompassed within the events of a year."

Gandhiji was to start on Dandi March to take possession of the salt deposits of the Government Salt Depot in the sea shore. Before starting this march, Gandhiji, sent a letter to the Viceroy apprising him of his plan. This letter, sent through Mr. Reginald Reynolds an Englishman Ashramite, gave a tale of India's ruination, poverty and serfdom under the British Raj, and demanded redress on the lines of the 11 points. If, however, no redress came, "On the 11th day of this month I shall proceed, with such co-workers of the Ashram as I can take, to disregard the provisions of the Salt Laws. I regard this tax to be the most iniquitous of all from the poor man's standpoint. As the Independence movement is essentially for the poorest in the land, the beginning will be made with this evil. The wonder is that we have submitted to the cruel monopoly for so long. It is, I know, open to you to frustrate my design by arresting me. I hope that there will be tens of thousands ready, in a disciplined manner, to take up the work after me, and, in the act of disobeying the Salt Act, to lay themselves open to the penalties of a Law that should never have disfigured the Statute Book."

The Viceroy's reply to this ultimatum came back quickly, and was unequivocal. His Excellency expressed his regret that Mr. Gandhi should have been "Contemplating a course of action which was clearly bound to involve violation of the Law and danger to the public peace."

Gandhiji wrote, "On bended knees I asked for bread and received the stone instead. The English Nation responds only to force, and I am not surprised by the Viceregal reply. The only public peace the

Nation knows is the peace of the public prison. India is a vast prison-house. I repudiate this (British) Law and regard it as my sacred duty to break the mournful monotony of compulsory peace that is choking the heart of the Nation for want of free vent."

Sardar Vallabhbhai prepares the way

The Dandi March thus became inevitable. Vallabhbhai, the Sardar of Bardoli went before his master to prepare the villagers on the route which Gandhiji was to follow. Vallabhbhai's speeches to the people of Gujrat were characteristic of his matter-of-fact eloquence and created a soul-stirring effect:

"Give up your wedding festivities", said he, "a people at war with a mighty Government cannot afford to indulge in these pastimes. From tomorrow, you might have to keep your doors closed and locked, and betake to the fields, only to return home in the evening. You have earned a reputation that you have yet to do much to deserve. Now the die is cast, and there is no turning back; you have to vindicate Gandhi's choice of your Taluka as the scene of his first experiment in Mass Civil Disobedience. . . ."

Gandhiji began his march on 12th March, 1930 accompanied by his 79 Ashramites. It was a historic scene, calling back to our minds, the old legends coupled with the names of Shree Rama and the Pandavas. The March was widely reported and anxiously watched all over the country. Each day added to the fervour and enthusiasm. 300 Village officers tendered their resignations from the area through which Gandhiji passed. Gandhiji had said earlier "Wait till I begin. Once I march to the place, you will know what to do." He had a clear vision of this scheme of resistance when others were in the dark.

Government had not yet arrested Gandhiji but Sardar Vallabhbhai and some other leaders had already been put in jail.

The road was watered, the path was strewn with flowers and leaves and decorated with flags and festoons.

Crowds gathered everywhere to witness the march and pay homage to this strange army and its general. Gandhiji preached his old Gospel along the route, Khaddar, abstinence from drink and removal of untouchability were the three favourite themes, but he also enjoined that all should join the Satyagrahis. During the march he declared that he would either die on the way or else keep away from the Ashram until Swaraj was won. Gandhiji's march lasted 24 days. They had traversed a distance of 200 miles. All along he was emphasising that the march was a pilgrimage, a period of penance not to be spent in feteing and feasting.

On the morning of April 5th, Gandhiji reached Dandi. Soon after the morning prayers, Gandhiji and his volunteers proceeded to break the Salt Law by picking up the salt lying on the seashore. Immediately after this Gandhiji issued a press statement: "Now that the technical or ceremonial breach of the Salt Law has been committed, it is now open to any one who would take the risk of prosecution under the Salt Law to manufacture salt wherever he wishes, and wherever it is convenient."

Arrest of Gandhiji

The country had been held back and was now ablaze from end to end, being permitted to start salt satyagraha as from the 6th of April, the national week. Huge public meetings were held in all big cities, the audience running up to six figures. The events at Karachi, Shiroda, Ratnagiri, Patna, Peshawar, Calcutta, Madras and Sholapur constituted a new experience in self-sacrifice and also laid bare the mailed fist of the British Government. There were military firings, lathi charges and arrests. Special Ordinances were promulgated to suppress the movement. The press was stricken hard. Gandhiji had been guiding the movement through his speeches and his Navjivan all along. The Government had expected the movement to fizzle out if Gandhiji was left alone. Gandhiji then drafted his second letter to the Viceroy announcing his intention of raiding the salt works of Dharsana and Chharsada. Then came the time for the arrest of Gandhiji. It was ten past one in the night when he was placed in a police car and taken to Yerwada prison.

Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett of the London Telegraph wrote: "There was something intensely dramatic in the atmosphere while we were waiting for the train, for we all felt we were sole eye-witnesses of a scene

which may become historical, this arrest of a prophet, false or true, for, false or true, Gandhi is now regarded as a holy man and a saint by millions of Indians. Who knows whether, one hundred years from now, he may be worshipped as a supreme being by 300 million people. We could not shake off these thoughts and it seemed incongruous to be at a level-crossing at dawn to take the prophet into custody."

Before the arrest, however, Gandhiji had dictated at Dandi his last message advising on what was to be done. In this he had said, "After I am arrested, neither the people nor my colleagues should be daunted. The conductor of this fight is God and not I." "Whole villages should come forward to pick or manufacture salt. Women should picket liquor and opium shops and foreign cloth shops. In every house young and old should begin spinning on takli and heaps of yarn should be daily woven. There should be bonfires of foreign cloth. Hindus should regard none as untouchables. Hindus, Muslims, Parsees and Christians, all should heartily embrace one another. The major communities should be satisfied with what remains after satisfaction of minor communities. Students should leave Government schools, and Government servants should resign and be employed in the service of the people, like the brave Patels and Talatis who have resigned. Thus shall we easily complete Swaraj."

After the Arrest

Gandhiji's arrest was followed by demonstrations from one end of the country to the other. It was the signal for voluntary and complete Hartals in Bombay, Calcutta and several other places. The whole city of Bombay was astir with the huge procession and several public meetings. About 50,000 men had struck work in the mills. Railway Workshops had to be closed. Cloth merchants decided on a 6 day hartal. Resignations from Honorary officers and services were announced at frequent intervals. There were serious disturbances at Sholapur and in Calcutta.

Gandhiji's arrest had raised a world-wide protest. There were sympathetic hartals among Indian businessmen in places as far wide as Panama, Sumatra and the boycott movement was a matter of concern to the press in England, Germany and France. In America an influentially signed message was cabled to Mr. Ramsay Meedonald by prominent clergymen led by Dr. John Haynes Holmes.

Civil Disobedience Extended

Mr. Abbas Tayabji took up Gandhiji's place as Leader of the salt satyagrahis but was soon arrested. Arrests, lathi charges and repression was let loose in towns and villages but was met with an increasing tempo of resistance by the people. After Gandhiji's arrest, the Working Committee met in May at Allahabad and extended the scope of Civil Disobedience. It called upon the entire nation to make all sacrifices that they were capable of. Boycott of foreign cloth throughout the country was to be completed without delay and production of Khadi was to be intensified. Contraband salt manufacture was to be extended. Forest Laws were to be disobeyed. Foreign cloth was to be boycotted. British goods including British banking, insurance, shipping and similar other institutions were to be boycotted. Lastly, "The Committee is of opinion that the time has arrived for the inauguration of No-tax campaign by non-payment of special taxes in certain Provinces, and that a beginning should be made by non-payment of the land tax in the Provinces where the ryotwari system prevails, such as Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnatak, Andhra, Tamil Nad and the Punjab, and the non-payment of the Chowkidari tax in Provinces like Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. It calls upon such Provinces to organize campaigns of non-payment of the land tax or Chowkidari tax in areas selected by the Provincial Congress Committees."

Dharsana Raid

After the arrest of Mr. Tayabji, Shrimati Sarojini Devi was to direct the raid at Dharsana. She was also arrested with her batch of volunteers. Batches of volunteers later rushed towards the salt depot. They were beaten and chased out. The same evening another batch of 220 volunteers were arrested. Fresh batches of volunteers congregated and more salt raids took place. A mass raid at Dharsana took place on the 21st May when 2,500 volunteers participated. They were led by Imam Saheb, the 62-year old colleague of Gandhiji in South Africa. The volunteers commenced the raid early in the morning and as they attacked the salt heaps at different places, the Police would charge them with lathis and beat them back. The Imam Saheb and other leaders were arrested. Hundreds of volunteers were injured, some of them fatally. As they were removed to Hospitals or prison camps by the Police, fresh batches came to Dharsana to take their places.

Wadala Raids

A succession of raids were also made on the Wadala salt depot and hundreds of volunteers took part in them. But the most demonstrative raid took place on the 1st June. On the morning of the first, nearly 15,000 volunteers and others participated in a mass raid at Wadala. Successive batches marched up to the Port Trust level-crossing and were held up by a Police Cordon. Soon the raiders among whom were women and children broke through the Cordon, splashed through slime and mud and ran over the pans. The raiders were repulsed by the Police who were acting under immediate supervision of the Home Member. Such mass raids took place in other parts of the country also. The way these raids were dealt with by the Police raised public indignation to high pitch. Mr. Webb Miller, writing to the New Freeman expressed abhorrence of the sights at Dharsana :—

"In eighteen years of reporting in twenty-two countries, during which I have witnessed innumerable civil disturbances, riots, street fights and rebellions, I have never witnessed such harrowing scenes as at Dharsana. Sometimes the scenes were so painful that I had to turn away momentarily. One surprising feature was the discipline of the volunteers. It seemed they were thoroughly imbued with Gandhi's non-violence creed."

The Civil Disobedience movement had assumed various aspects and was carried with varying success in different Provinces.

The boycott of foreign cloth had become more effective. The business community in Bombay including the mill owners rendered enthusiastic support. Bombay was the chief centre and guide for the rest of the country. The movement, was of revolt and defiance of the British authority on the one hand and constructive work for the masses on the other. Boycott of cloth was coupled with khadi. Prohibition took the shape of cutting down all Toddi trees and picketing all wine shops. Suppression of the newspapers was met with by innumerable cyclostyled news sheets. There were processions and meetings in defiance of the Police.

The repression that was let loose to subdue this new spirit and situation was also diverse in shape and mounting to new heights in severity. The Working Committee of the Congress was declared unlawful and Pandit Motilal Nehru was arrested on June 3rd.

The repression, however, served to intensify the movement specially of the boycott. The volunteer organization in Bombay became more thoroughgoing. Women came to the front. Braving the sun and rain, and lathis and arrest these tender girls and women, at the liquorshops and cloth shops made picketing very effective. When a shopkeeper would not stop to sell his goods, his wife or daughter would go and picket his shop. The young women and old brought up in the seclusion of their homes had rallied to the call and found a new world in the sacrifice and suffering for the country. Their participation was electrifying in its effect, and incedently brought them a new social emancipation in the process.

Incidents of heroism and names of places and persons that specially distinguished themselves in those glorious days are too numerous to be commemmorated. We can but make mention of a few.

At Peshawar the Pathans once notoriously blood-thirsty and valiant, had been transformed into a non-violent people under the leadership of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan affectionately called the Frontier Gandhi. They gave an account of themselves which has become a legend for the whole country. There were serious cases of firings at Peshawar, but the spirit of the people remained totally unsubdued. At one time as the leader of the procession was shot down by the military police another came to take his place and was shot down to be replaced by a third till there were several casualties in cold blood.

Another incident connected with Peshawar fills us with pride to-day—*i.* the Garhwali soldiers. There was a wholesale firing on the unarmed crowds. Two Platoons of the second battalion of the 18th Royal Rifles, Hindu troops in the midst of a Muslim crowd refused the order to fire and fraternised with the people.

A court-martial imposed savage sentences on 17 men of Garhwali rifles. One was given life transportation, another 15 years rigorous imprisonment and rest terms varying from 3 to 10 years. This incident put a new spirit among the people. From

April 25th to May 4th Peshawar was in the hands of the people and had to be recaptured by powerful British forces with Air Squadrons.

In Bengal for some months, the district of Midnapore appeared to be beyond the reach of the Bengal Government. The revolutionary party, disagreeing with Gandhiji's non-violence were also active. The armoury raid in Chittagong, which even Gandhiji had to admit was a "daring deed", electrified the country. There were news, carried by the illicit news-sheets and emissaries, of a strange new life and existence, in villages and towns. Young and old, men and women cheerfully braved the Police lathis, squatted on the road in passive resistance for hours on end when processions were blocked, and the satyagrahis were accompanied and seen off to jails with flowers and celebrations, by families and friends.

At Bombay a boy named Babu Gamno stood across a Police lorry at the Kalbadevi Road to prevent its progress and was crushed under it.

BARDOLI ONCE MORE

In Gujrat the great event was no-tax campaign successfully carried out in Bardoli and Borsad Talukas. Bardoli, which had become famous earlier was to be taught a lesson now. But it emerged even more triumphant. The oppression by the authorities and the resistance of the peasantry was so great that 80,000 people left their homes and migrated to villages in the neighbourhood of Baroda State. Mr. Brailsford gave a description of the exodus, part of which is given below :—

"And then began one of the strangest migrations in history. One after another, acting with a unanimity of which only Indians with their tight caste organisations are capable, these villagers packed their belongings into their bullock carts and drove them across the border into Baroda. A few even burned the rich crop which they were too late to remove. I visited one of their camps. They have built temporary shelters with matting for walls and palm leaves on sacking for a roof The rains are over ; they will suffer no grave hardship till May. But they are crowded together with their beloved cattle, and packed in the narrow space are all their household goods, the great jars in which they store their rice, cloths and churns, chests and beds, shining pots of brass, here a plough, there a picture of the gods, and everywhere, at intervals, the presiding genius of this camp a photograph of Mahatma Gandhi. I asked a big group of them why they had left their homes. The women gave the promptest and simplest answer,—"Because Mahatmaji is in prison." The men were still conscious of an economic grievance ; "farming does not pay, and tax is unjust." One or two said, "To win Swaraj" or Self-Government.

"I spent two memorable days touring the deserted villages in company with the Chairman of the Congress organization of Surat. One passed row after row of the padlocked cottages, and through the bars of the windows one could see only empty rooms. The streets were silent lakes of sunlight. Nothing moved until a monkey swung himself over a roof."

The heroic incident of the women of Borsadh may also be mentioned here. On the 21st January, 1931 a demonstration was to be staged at Borsad. The Police determined to counter this demonstration, tried to over-awe the volunteers. The women of Borsad showed fearless resistance. Their pots were broken. They were dispersed by force, thrown down and the Police trod upon their chests with boots.

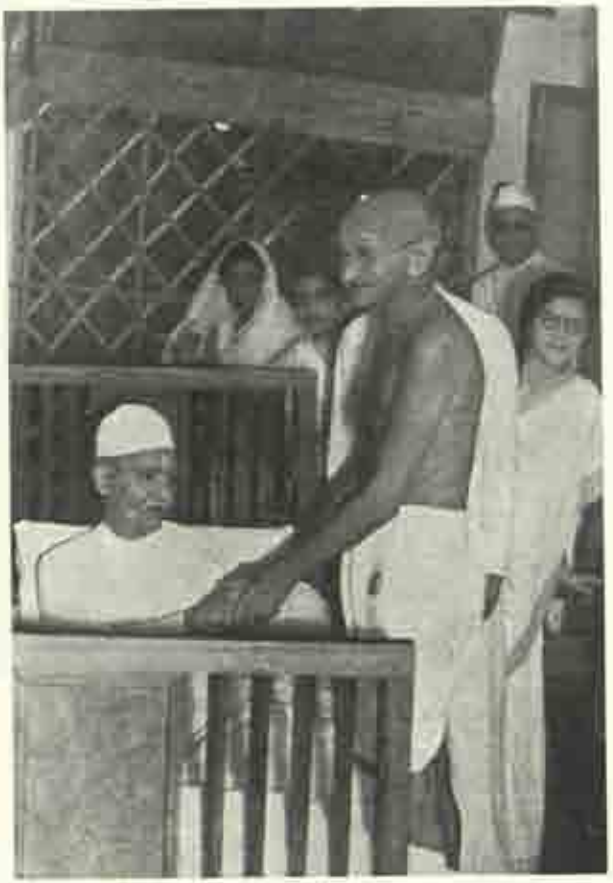
The Police spared, and respected nobody. S. Vallabhbhai's own mother aged over 80 was cooking her food and the boiling pot was knocked down by the Police.

United Province was the only province where a general no-tax campaign was inaugurated. Both the Zamindars and tenants being called upon to withhold payment of rent and revenue.

In Bihar, the Chowkidar tax was withheld in large areas. The Provinces suffered to the full from the imposition of punitive police and confiscation of large properties in lieu of petty sums.

In the Central Provinces various satyagrahis were successfully launched and continued inspite of the heavy fines and police excesses.

Karnatak also organised no-tax campaign in which more than 800 families participated.



Gandhiji's last meeting with Malaviyaji



Bhulabhai Desai

Great Leader of the Parliamentary Front. His stirring stand in the I. N. A. trial, upholding the right of a subject nation to wage war for its freedom was a land-mark in our struggle.



Ali Brothers.



Round Table Conference.



Desbandhu Chittaranjan Das

His life was a poem of sacrifice and service.



Pt. Motilal Nehru



Mrs. Swaroop Rani Nehru



The Nehrus
Jawahar, Krishna, Chandralekha, Indira and Vijaylakshmi.



Kamala, Jawahar and Indira.

Freedoms battle
From Sire to son



Jawahar, Rajiv and Indira



Satyavati
Beloved leader and martyr of freedom.



Aruna Asafali.
Rediscovers herself after 1942, and is honoured by the women. The group has many of the most prominent leaders of women's movement in India.

The Punjab gave a good account of itself, specially in the boycott of foreign cloth. Women picketers including Mussalman ladies took part. Siapa—(mock funeral wailing) was practised on the houses of those who would sell foreign cloth. On 31st December 1931, the anniversary of the independence resolution was celebrated. At Lahore Subhas Chandra Bose who had been recently released from Jail after serving a year's term, was severely beaten while marching in a procession.

This harrowing tale and the epic of this glorious time in the national struggle can be dealt with but too briefly and in rather a sketchy manner. For most of us, it constitutes the most memorable days of our life.

NONVIOLENCE

In Allahabad my mother was in a procession which was stopped by the Police and later charged with lathis. When the procession had been halted some one brought her a chair, and she was sitting on this on the road at the head of the procession. Some people who were especially looking after her, including my secretary, were arrested and removed, and then came the police charge. My mother was knocked down from her chair, and was hit repeatedly on the head with canes. Blood came out of an open wound in the head; she fainted, and lay on the roadside, which had now been cleared of the processionists and public. After some time she was picked up and brought by a police officer in his car to Anand Bhawan.

That night a false rumour spread in Allahabad that my mother had died. Angry crowds gathered together, forgot about peace and non-violence, and attacked the police. There was firing by the police, resulting in the death of some people.

When the news of all this came to me some days after the occurrence (for we had a weekly paper), the thought of my frail old mother lying bleeding on the dusty road obsessed me, and I wondered how I would have behaved if I had been there. How far would my non-violence have carried me? Not very far, I fear, for that sight would have made me forget the long lesson I had tried to learn for more than a dozen years; and I would have recked little of the consequences, personal or national.

(An Autobiography : Nehru)

I have learnt through bitter experience the one supreme lesson, to conserve my anger, and the heat conserved is transmuted into energy, even, so, our anger controlled can be transmuted into a power which can move the world.—Mahatma Gandhi.





CHAPTER XXIII

THE SECOND CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT



GANDHI-IRWIN PACT AND R. T. CONFERENCE

THE Civil Disobedience movement continued vigorously inspite of untold repression. More than a 100,000 persons including thousands of ladies and 15,000 muslims courted arrest. Efforts were made for a compromise and after several attempts of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. M. R. Jayakar carried throughout the year, an agreement was reached between the Government and the Congress after several days strenuous discussions. This agreement, known as the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, is well known and has been variously criticised. Gandhiji called this Pact as a victory both of the Congress and the Government. Meanwhile a Round Table Conference had met in London in 1931. The intention seemed to have been, to set off the stage, before the world of "representative gathering" of Indians trying for an agreed plan for the future government of their country. It was not Indians, but the Viceroy and his officials who chose these representatives. What they actually did was to carefully assemble all the diverse elements, every creed, every party, every racial minority, every interest in this sub-continent. They collected—princes, princesses, untouchable, Christians, Sikhs, Muslims, Hindus, land-lords, commercial magnates, official representatives of Labour, but the true representatives of the country, the Leaders of the Congress, were not there. They were enjoying hospitality in jails. After the truce, the Congress Working Committee passed a resolution that Mahatma Gandhi should represent the Congress at the Round Table Conference. "The honour of the Congress was lowered by its inclusion as an item in the motely array of Government puppets brought like captives to Imperial Rome to display their confusion and divisions, for the amusement of Westminister Legislators." (R. P. Dutt.) As was expected, the communal question and the differences among the Indian people loomed large in this conference and all efforts to solve it by consent proved unsuccessful. Gandhiji put up a valient fight and some of the speeches he delivered were most striking. His speech on the Congress that he represented is reproduced below.

The Congress that Gandhiji represented

"I am but a poor humble agent acting on behalf of the Indian National Congress; and it might be as well to remind ourselves of what the Congress stands for and what it is. You will then extend your sympathy to me, because I know that the burden that rests upon my shoulders is really very great. The Congress is, if I am not mistaken, the oldest political organisation we have in India. It has had nearly 50 years of life, during which period it has, without any interruption, held its annual session. It is what it means,—National. It represents no particular community, no particular class, no particular interest.

It claims to represent all Indian interests and all classes. It is a matter of the greatest pleasure to me to state that it was first conceived in an English brain. Allan Octavian Hume we knew as the Father of the Congress. It was nursed by two great Parsees, Pherozeshah Mahta and Dadabhai Naoroji, whom all India delighted to recognise as its Grand Old Man. From the very commencement the Congress had Mussalmans, Christians, Anglo-Indians, I might say all religions, sects, creeds, represented upon it more or less fully. The late Budruddin Tyabji identified himself with the Congress. We have had Mussalmans as Presidents of the Congress, and Parsees too. I can recall at least one Indian Christian at the present moment. Kali Charan Banerjee (an Indian Christian), than whom I have not had the privilege of knowing a purer Indian, was also thoroughly identified with the Congress. I miss, as I have no doubt all of you miss, the presence in our midst of Mr. K. T. Paul. Although, I do not know, but so far as I know, he never officially belonged to the Congress, he was a Nationalist to the full.

"As you know, the late Maulana Mahomed Ali whose presence also we miss to-day, was a President of the Congress, and at present we have four Mussalmans as members of the Working Committee which consists of 15 members. We have had women as our Presidents; Dr. Annie Besant was the first, and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu followed. We have her as a member of the Working Committee also; and so, if we have no distinctions of class or creed, we have no distinctions of sex either.

"The Congress has from its very commencement taken up the cause of the so-called 'untouchables'. There was a time when the Congress had at every annual session, as its adjunct, the Social Conference, to which the late Ranade had dedicated his energies, among his many activities. Headed by him, you will find in the programme of the Social Conference, reform in connection with the untouchables taking a prominent place. But in 1920, the Congress took a large step and brought the question of removal of untouchability as a plank on the political platform, made it an important item of the political programme. Just as the Congress considered Hindu-Muslim unity, thereby meaning unity amongst all the classes, to be indispensable for the attainment of Swaraj, so also did the Congress consider the removal of the curse of untouchability as an indispensable condition for the attainment of full freedom.

"The position the Congress took up in 1920 remains the same to-day, and so you will see that the Congress has attempted from its very beginning to be what it has described itself to be, namely, National in every sense of the term. If your Highnesses will permit me to say so, in the very early stages, the Congress took up your cause also. Let me remind this Committee that it was the G. O. M. of India who sponsored the cause of Kashmir and Mysore, and these two great Houses, I venture in all humility to submit, owe not a little to the efforts of Dadabhai Naoroji and the Congress.

"Even up to now the Congress has endeavoured to serve the Princes of India by refraining from any interference in their domestic and internal affairs. I hope, therefore, that this brief introduction that I thought fit to give will serve to enable the Sub-Committee and those who are at all interested in the claims of the Congress, to understand that it has endeavoured to deserve the claim that it has made. It has failed, I know, often to live up to the claim, but I venture to submit, that if you were to examine the history of the Congress you would find that it has more often succeeded, and progressively succeeded than failed.

"Above all the Congress represents, in its essence, the dumb semi-starved millions scattered over the length and breadth of the land in its 7,00,000 villages, no matter whether they come from what is called British India, or what is called Indian India. Every interest which, in the opinion of the Congress, is worthy of protection, has to subserve this interest, and if there is a genuine real class I have no hesitation in saying on behalf of the Congress that the Congress will sacrifice every interest for the sake of the interest of these dumb millions. It is, therefore, essentially a peasant organisation, and it is becoming so progressively. You, and even the Indian members of the Sub-Committee, will perhaps be astonished to find that to-day the Congress, through its organisation, the All-India Spinners' Association, is finding work for nearly 50,000 women in nearly 2,000 villages, and these women are possibly 50 per cent. Mussalman women. Thousands of them belong to the so-called untouchable class. We have thus, in this constructive manner, penetrated these villages and the effort is being made to cover every one of the 7,00,000 villages. It is a superhuman task but if human effort can do so, you will presently find the Congress covering all of these villages and bringing to them the message of the spinning wheel."

Failure of the Round Table Conference

Apparently the Government's scheme at the Round Table Conference was only a scheme for Indians sharing power with the beaurocracy and not one designed to achieve responsible Government. "I wish them well and the Congress is entirely out of it. The Congress will wander," said Gandhiji, "no matter how many years, in the wilderness, rather than bend itself to a proposal under which the hardy tree of freedom and Responsible Government can never grow."

An impasse had developed over the communal question. The British posing as the virtuous and unwilling arbiter, had, through its Labour mouthpiece the Prime Minister Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, several months later, declared a new scheme of divide and rule in the shape of the Communal Award. Gandhiji had taken a mighty vow which nearly cost his life, at the Round Table Conference. "One word more as to the so-called untouchables" said he, "I can understand the claims advanced on behalf of other communities, but the claims advanced on behalf of the 'untouchables' are to me the unkindest cut of all. It means a perpetual bar sinister. We do not want the 'untouchables' to be classified as a separate class. Sikhs may remain such in perpetuity, so may Muslims and Christians. Will the untouchables remain untouchables in perpetuity? I would far rather that Hinduism died than that untouchability lived. Those who speak of the political rights of untouchables do not know India and do not know how Indian society is constructed. Therefore, I want to say with all the emphasis I can command that if I was the only person to resist this thing, I will resist it with my life."

When the conference concluded on the first of December, Gandhiji proposed the vote of thanks to the chair and pointed out that they had come to the parting of ways and that their ways would take different directions—"the dignity of human nature is such that we must face the storms of life. I do not know in what direction my path would lie. But it does not matter to me. Even though I may have to go in an exactly different direction, you are still entitled to a vote of thanks from the bottom of my heart."

Gandhiji had come back empty-handed from the Round Table Conference. The condition on which the Congress had agreed to participate, abandonment of stark repression, was also being broken. Gandhiji had been greatly worried by the news from India and had cabled to the Viceroy. The Government of Lord Willingdon, Irwin's successor, was, it seemed, determined to undo the mistake of Lord Irwin and to take a new offensive to crush the spirit of the Congress.

Breach of the Pact and 2nd Civil Disobedience Movement

The Congress leaders and the congress workers in India had also realised even before Gandhiji returned, that the fight will not be staved off any longer. Jawaharlal Nehru and T. A. K Sherwani had been arrested and put in jail again. In the North West Frontier Province Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan and Dr. Khan Saheb were also arrested. Special Ordinances had been enforced in the United Provinces, the North West Frontier Province and in Bengal.

Congress declared unlawful

Gandhiji had strictly warned the Congressmen not to initiate any aggressive campaign but not to suffer any insults to national self-respect. The truce period had been the period of preparation on the part of the Government for renewed hostilities. The Working Committee severely condemned the atrocities and the terrible losses and indignities inflicted on innocent people in pursuance of the policy of terrorism. The President of the Congress Sardar Vallabhbai Patel had addressed the Government on several occasions without any avail. Gandhiji heard from his colleagues a pitiful tale of infringement by Government in letter and in spirit of the agreement. He asked the Viceroy for an interview but was refused. The beaurocracy now wanted to teach the Congress a lesson. Gandhiji was arrested on January 4, 1932, and the principal Congress leaders all over the country were simultaneously put in jail. Congress was declared illegal. Their funds, premises and property confiscated, their press was banned. Ready made ordinances were brought forth and enforced.

The Congress and the country took up this ruthless challenge. By March 2nd, 1932 already there were 80,000 arrests. By April they rose to 1,20,000. Repression, this time, also exceeded by far the level

of 1931. There were wholesale shootings and violence. Enormous fines on persons and villages and seizure of lands and property along with arrests, were made. The Government had contemplated that the movement would be over in six weeks time but it was not before 20 months that the fight had to be given up.

During this period, inspite of precautions taken by Government and in face of ruthless prosecutions, the annual session of the Congress was held in brief, electrifying hours at Delhi and in Calcutta.

The boycott of British goods took a most intensive form during this movement. The Congress organization was kept alive by a succession of "Dictators" and the movement was governed even without the old and experienced leaders by the people with the help of a few "shadow cabinets". Shri Jai Prakash Narain had at this time run the All India machine of the Congress in a very able and fearless manner.

The Government openly boasted of the very drastic and severe measures that they undertook and that there was to be no "drawn battle this time". The Congress was, perhaps, then working under a handicap. While it was declared illegal, there was to be no secrecy as a matter of principle in the Congress movement.

Gandhiji's Epic Fast

In September 1932 Gandhiji declared a fast unto death, to prevent the scheme of separate representation for the depressed classes, since that would vivisect Hinduism. This resulted in the Poona Pact which increased the number of reserved seats for the depressed classes.

In May 1933 Gandhiji undertook another fast not against the Government but "for purification of myself and my associates and for greater vigilance and watchfulness in connection with the Harijan cause." The president of the Congress in consultation with Gandhiji announced the suspension of the Civil Disobedience movement for 6 weeks. In July 1933 Gandhiji asked for interview with the Viceroy which was refused. The Congress decided to end the Civil Disobedience and replaced it by individual Civil Disobedience. All Congress organizations were voluntarily dissolved. The Government, however, continued its course of repression. Gandhiji was later released and decided to devote his time to Harijan work.

C. D. Called Off

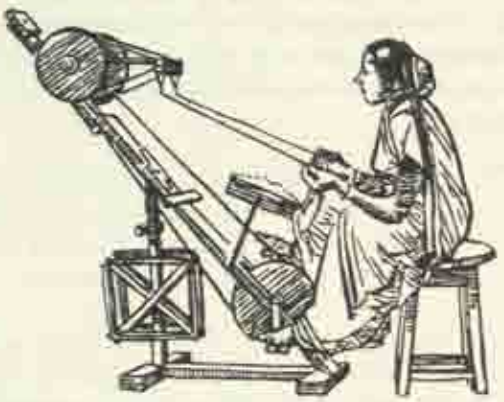
The struggle was finally suspended by the All India Congress Committee who were allowed to meet at Patna and decided to call off the Civil Disobedience unconditionally, except for the provision that Gandhiji alone, when he thought it necessary, could offer Civil Disobedience. A month earlier Gandhiji had issued a statement that the message of Satyagraha had been "adulterated in the process of transmission". "In the present circumstances only one and that myself, should for the time being bear the responsibility of Civil Disobedience."

At Patna, under the leadership of Dr. Ansari, it was decided to take up the Parliamentary programme under the prevailing situation, and to contest the impending elections to the Central Assembly. The ban of the Congress was not lifted till June 1934. It still remained on a number of its subsidiary organizations and youth leagues that took a prominent part in the movement in 1932 and the Red Shirts in the North West Frontier.



CHAPTER XXIV

CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME



MAGAN CHARKHA

RECONQUEST BY RECONSTRUCTION

Dr. Pattabhi Sitarammaya

THE Edifice of Indian politics had been for over 30 years since the birth of the Congress (1885) an inverted structure. Instead of planting the foundations firm and deep in village education and village organisation, it had reared its sky-scraping castles of Swaraj and was hard put to it to find suitable tenants therein. Men of devotion and culture, well informed men possessing the capacity of clear thinking, men of intelligence imbued with a civic sense, men who could co-ordinate the individual with the communal and the national, men too that understood the raison d'etre of each person being the master of his own household and each nation being the Lord of its own Destiny,—it was such men that were required to rear and dwell in the edifice of Swaraj. Such men must be made, though the instincts that make them are always inborn and inherent in human nature. The few that have developed their instincts by study and travel march ahead in ideas and the passion for Swaraj that is just now permeating the nation has been kindled primarily through their initiative and insight.

There nevertheless remain the vast mass of the population who could not readily imbibe this passion or even passively permit it to infect them. With its modern amenities of Science and Art, of Medicine and Engineering, of invention and discovery,—annihilating Time and Distance, administering Law and Order, facilitating Transport and Trade, giving abundance of money unequally to the rich and the poor, inspiring awe and horror on the one hand by its engines of destruction and generating on the other, admiration and even affection by its constructive resourcefulness, this well-organised Government under which we live made the incubus of foreign rule little felt by the man in the street. The humble villager toiling and moiling all day, and equally, the labourer in towns who built up the wealth of the capitalist, was content to lead a life of 'placid and pathetic contentment'. Conditions, however, had changed since Montague visited India in 1917, but while the spirit of the people was roused and their sense of self-respect and national consciousness awakened, their minds were still sunk in ignorance and they were unable to reason out the philosophy of Swaraj. What they wanted was a manual or hand book, a Swarajya Darpan, that showed as in a mirror the treacheries and tricks by which this country lost its independence, the degradations and degeneracies that had overtaken the Nation through long years of subjection and finally the dangers of the continuance of Foreign Rule.

It is a truism that foreign rule brings about both moral and material retrogression as it is based primarily on a conflict of interests. And at one time though men like Lord Birkenhead and others of Imperialist persuasion had trotted out the theory of England holding India in trust, still statesmen were not wanting who had frankly dwelt upon the two-fold function of England in India—administration and

exploitation. The two are indeed aspects of the same process, the one being preliminary to the other. Lately, during the General Election of 1929 in England, Mr. Philip Snowden who had since been called to fill the Chancellorship of Exchequer under the Labour Governments, speaking at Spring-field, stated that Great Britain's Export problem depended on raising the purchasing power of the backward people. The Tories, he said, did nothing in that direction and were content with doing nothing but wave the Union Jack and talk of Dominions. "If the purchasing power of Indians were raised by a penny weekly, they would take 60 millions worth of Lancashire goods, leaving no spindle or loom idle. The Indians were poor because they did not produce greatly, the reason being they had not the necessary agricultural implements. Let them have steel ploughs and motor tractors. Let the Government of India, with the financial support of England, carry out the great irrigation projects that would raise the purchasing power of the three hundred millions not by a penny weekly but by a shilling weekly." That was his prescription. What does it matter if India's looms and spindles remained idle? Sir Stafford Cripps as President of the Board of Trade demanded in 1944 that Britain's exports to India should increase by 50 per cent in order to maintain the British standard of life. What did it matter if the Indian standard of life remained where it had been or if there was no standard at all because there was no life?

In words seemingly innocent yet benevolent, this Labour Leader, this Socialist statesman, explained the purpose of England's rule in India. If England had not materially succeeded in developing the purchasing power of the Indian, she knows how to dump her goods on India by manipulating the exchange. Raise the rupee value from 16*d*. to 18 *d*. and you will augment the purchasing power of the Indian by one eighth. The English statesmen in the Cabinet have been merely the Directorate of a huge Commercial and capitalist concern called the British Empire, unlimited having its pivot in India. The capture of the Indian market is the key to the prosperity of England. It is on this basis that Mr. Hughes, sometime Premier of Australia, roundly condemned the grant of Swaraj to India. We take the following from the daily press:

"That if Swaraj is granted to India, it would disturb the equilibrium of the Empire and endanger world peace and bring the Empire perilously near war, is the note of warning struck by Mr. William Hughes, the Australian Statesman, in a contribution to the press. Writing on the significance of the Empire Day, Hughes says that the history of the Empire is a history of splendid adventure and eulogises the Empire-builders and pleads for an effective voice to the dominions in Imperial administration. Mr. Hughes then utters a warning against the danger of grant of Swaraj to India and says that the possibility of Indian freedom menacing world peace is a fatal bar to grant to India not only independence but even self-governing powers, exercised by the Dominions within the British Commonwealth. Mr. Hughes further says that Australia would oppose the grant of further powers to Indian Nationalists involving suffering to the oppressed classes".

We all remember how Lord Rosebery who passed away in the thirties made a most thoughtful observation decades ago, when he predicted that the wars of the twentieth century would be commercial wars. When this is granted, we understand the basis of all imperialism. And once having understood it, it becomes our duty to work out the problem in all its phases and bring home to the untutored peasant and the unsophisticated labourer all that a Capitalist-imperialist regime stands for—more especially in India where that regime is a foreign one. Take what branch of administration you may, what aspect of Government you please, you will note the subtle and secret channels of drainage of national wealth from India, as well as India's ever-increasing economic degradation and decline.

The object of the Congress is to make it subserve the purpose of a Swaraj darpan and to explain the repercussions that foreign rule has had during the past two centuries. Politically that rule has emasculaced the nation, killing all originality and initiative and fostering a spirit of servility and abjectness. Economically the nation's wealth and resources are being depleted and the so-called "development" of the country has been designed to advance the well-being of the foreign merchant, capitalist and manufacturer who is in daily and hourly need of India's raw materials and food products. Administratively the mechanism of Government has been so planned as to consolidate the power of the British in India, run Government cheap with 'native' labour, 'native' intellect and 'native' ambition, all of which, however, have been sedu-

lously held under check. The borderline has been kept clearly demarkated between that Education which might have made the Indian a proud and self-respecting citizen and that which makes of him a subservient servant of the crown, between these Legislatures which might have functioned as true representative institutions designed to promote Responsible Government and those which merely engage the vociferous politicians and mark them out for official favours, between a system of Law which might have jealously safeguarded People's rights and a system that protects only the rights and vested interests of the bureaucracy, and finally between that fostering of culture which might have conserved all that was best and greatest in the national asset and that imparting of instruction which has disgusted the Indian with his home and country his civilisation and tradition, and made of him a handy tool to work the machinary of alien rule. Beneath the cover of Government manned by men with large mercantile interests of a personal or national character, the slavery of the Indian people in the domain of art and culture, of trade and industry, of administration and economics, has been perfected in a manner little noticed by the superficial observer. It, therefore, became the purpose of the Congress to lay bare the truths that were camouflaged before and awaken in the people a sense of national self-consciousness and national self-respect based not only sentiment but on reason and facts.

The Congress which had in the early years stood for places and posts under Government rose to the point of demanding Colonial Self-Government in 1908, under the inspiration of Japanese victory over Russia. In the first world war it demanded Home Rule but on its termination it urged self-determination for India and Swaraj. It was about this time that Gandhi came on the scene of Indian politics with his new recipes for curing the political malady.

The British had been carrying on with the co-operation of the Indian through those three institutions—Courts, colleges, and councils founded sixty years previously which converted the Mansions of India into the Stables or the Garages of Britain. Gandhi wanted to restore India's pristine glory and urged non-co-operation with the British, which immediately meant a boycott of courts, colleges, councils and cloth. A four-fold programme was drawn up embracing *Economic* reform through Khadder and village industries, *Educational* through national schools, *Social* through the removal of untouchability and *Moral* through the abolition of Sin Money flowing from drink, opium and salt. Great and immediate were the results, intense was the sense of self-respect roused in the nation. The Prince of Wales' visit to India was boycotted at a cost of 30,000 political prisoners, the country was organised through village, tahil, district, provincial and All India Congress Committees, a crore and more of money was collected, millions of Congress members were enlisted and the constructive programme was pushed forward with the aid of the rescued Charka and the resuscitated Loom. The Congress demands went against the grain of the nation, its vested interests and wonted ways. Soon reaction set in but it did not take long for Gandhi's leadership to be restored in 1929 under the disappointments of the Council programme and failure of Lord Irwin to implement his promise of Dominion Status. Swaraj was no longer a dubious expression for its content was definitely equated to complete independence. And a mighty blow was delivered in the Salt Satyagraha campaign which compelled the Viceroy to enter into a settlement with Gandhi and the Congress as a result of which the sixty thousand prisoners in jails were released. Congress prestige rose to the highest pitch but the British failed as usual to adhere to the pledged word. Hostilities were renewed in 1932 under Lord Willingdon's Viceroyalty and this time a lakh and twenty thousand civil disobedients crowded the jails. As usual civil disobedience and council entry alternated with each other. In the meantime the Government of India Act was passed conferring in 1935 Provincial Autonomy and deferring the Federation till a suitable date. Eight provinces fell to the Congress in and after the Elections of 1937. But the outbreak of the 2nd World War in 1939 disturbed the even progress of affairs and the failure of the British to specify the objectives of the War in relation to India while involving the nation in it, compelled the resignation of the Congress Ministries and a fresh campaign of Individual Civil Disobedience. The threatened invasion of India in 1942 by Japan brought Sir Stafford Cripps on the scene but his mission to engage the affections of India on the side of Britain having proved a failure, the cry of 'Quit India' was raised in April, 1942 which echoed from the fastnesses of Kabul on to the tapering point of the mainland at Cape Comerin. A mighty revolution was witnessed in India which shook the empire to its very foundations. Hindusthan rose in revolt to man and was imprisoned and

TWO HISTORICAL MOMENTS

At Lahore

The Congress defines Swaraj as complete independence for India.



The Rashtrapati at Lahore in 1929 Session.

At Karachi

The Congress interprets Swaraj for the masses in terms of political and economic freedom.



Rashtrapati Patel at Karachi in 1930 Session preparing the draft of Resolution on fundamental Rights and Economic programme.



Acharya Narendra Dev
and
Shri Achyut Patwardhan



Shri S. K. Patil



Acharya Jugal Kishore



Gandhiji Revisits Champaran

repressed. Once again the jail gates were opened on 16th June, 1945 and to make a long story short, a Cabinet Mission visited India in March and April, 1946 and prolonged negotiations brought a Constituent Assembly into existence.

The prgress of events has not been smooth however. The fact is that Britain has all along proceeded on the basis of the cult of *Divide et impera* which resulted in cutting up India *vertically* into 11 provinces on the one hand and 562 states on the other, and *horizontally* into Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians, and then *transversely* into rural and urban and in the end, *obliquely*, into excluded and included sections. Really there have been four factors all along in conflict in this great battle for Indian Freedom,—the British, the States, the Muslim League and the Congress.

THE EARTHQUAKE WAY TO RENAISSANCE

Sri G. C. Sondhi

The Earthquake in Bihar was a great national calamity. But the memory of the Earthquake is valuable today more for giving a picture of how the Congress worked under Gandhiji when it was not engaged in a direct action movement. The Earthquake in this way became quite a land mark of progress and what was a great disaster became an opportunity for reconstruction. It is from this point of view that the following account of the earthquake has a place in these pages.

It is a dark and chilly night. A city of rubble heaps lies stretched under the open sky like a vast gypsy camp. Men and women corpses and broken bodies are huddled round bonfires. It is the first night after the great Bihar earthquake at Muzaffarpur a night when man, bereft of all trimmings is reduced to primeval equality and dependence on his fellow-man.

Earlier in the evening, some of us had found ourselves together at a certain spot, engaged frantically, racing with the lengthening shadows, digging for precious treasure of warm human bodies. Overwhelming tragedy enveloped us all round. Nature, having struck, lay quietly now, like a gorged beast. But a struggle had begun. The resilience innate in man was already manifesting itself.

The Bihar earthquake, one of the severest in history, affected several thousand square miles of what is one of the most thickly populated areas of the world. The earthquake affected an area of 30,000 sq. miles and a population of about a crore and a half. Nearly 20,000 persons are recorded to have lost their lives. Houses numbering over 10 lakhs were damaged or destroyed. 65,000 wells and tanks were destroyed or damaged. Nearly 10 lakhs of bighas of crops were covered with sand and damaged.

But as we look back on it, the earthquake assumes a new aspect. It stands out as a clear landmark ushering, with a shattering echo, the dawn of a new era in the province. The levelling down, it now seems was not for a night or of houses alone. The shock had set in motion a psychological process to demolish a feudal system of ideas and institutions, class snobbery, and isolation and disabilities of caste, creed and sex. Forces of regeneration no doubt, struggling already for birth, in substrata of popular consciousness, were released and quickened. The stage was set for the drama that was to follow.

It was Jawaharlal, out of jail then for a brief spell, who crossed the barriers first of all to reach us. Till then, we were cut off from the world. The Government authorities stood paralysed. Public leaders were in jail. People were stunned. His hurricane visit and personality restored our courage and let the world know of the magnitude of the catastrophe in Bihar. Rajendra Babu was soon out and took up the reins. The response from the country, to his call, was phenomenal. A stream of men and material coming from all corners of the country began and swelled into a flood-tide. Every morning we were thrilled to see famous personalities arriving and new relief camps springing up. The two or multi-nation theory was not then known to us. There was hardly a known social worker or organisation of any province and community that was not evident at this rendezvous.

Gandhiji, soon, came and made Bihar his headquarters, along with the numerous household of well-known social workers. A net work of relief centres was set up in the towns and villages, with a distinguished secretariat at Patna. Gandhiji went

over the stricken area amidst strange scenes of enthusiasm. Roads, even railways over which he passed were lined deep on both sides with festive crowds, who had travelled on foot and bullock carts over long distances. His party often included one or two national and international celebrities, and a family of gracious women and bright children. Mamoth gatherings heard his simple words of courage and the devotional melody of the mass prayers. The whole countryside was lit up and astir, with a new hope and purpose.

Meanwhile, the remarkable rally of first rate men and women workers had spread wide and deep into the villages and had taken up abode and relief work in the various centres.

It was an exhilerating experience, a joyous constructive adventure for many of us. For the villager, besides providing such relief as was badly needed, it was a visual school of absorbing interest in a simple but attractive technique of life and work, that was new but not alien to his understanding. Here were new ideas about such familiar things as huts and latrines, dietary and clothes, women's place in the scheme of household, the ways of a better community life, about relations with other people, the untouchable and the landlord's agent, about the feasibility of getting new wells, schools, and dispensaries, about what is being done elsewhere and what could be done in this our country, of which this village is a part.

And these lessons were not imparted with lantern slides, by low paid lackadazical departmental staff, but by highly intelligent men and women, fired with a missionary spirit, a Sucheta Kriplani, or an Abid Ali, through the life they lived and interpreted from day to day. *Sabarmatis* and *Wardhas* were, as if multiplied and brought to the door of the Bihar villager, to work a metamorphosis in the habits of his thought and life.

The confluence of so many of our first rank public men, for long months and their pre-occupation went further afield in its results. The gigantic bee-hive of the relief organisation had come to be like a prolonged session of the Congress. It had the same Khadi-clad, keen faced, cosmopolitan groups, attracted similar excited crowds, with the same brisk activity and lively discussions. Minds were actively working. One Congress movement had just closed. New ideas and programmes were in the air. One common realisation, as never before, had been born, that India lives in the villages, and that any programme to be effective must be based on work in the masses and for them. But different groups interpreted it differently.

The change, for the majority of Congressmen came later at Patna by way of a constitutional programme. The new franchise was to be worked and if possible seats on the legislatures and on the new provincial ministries were to be captured.

Multi-purpose Plans

Gandhiji, while extending his blessings to this programme, turned even more intensely to work in the villages. More comprehensive, multi-purpose plans and separate bodies for social, economic and educational re-building of the villages became Gandhiji's main personal work. Ever since, these plans have gone on from expansion to expansion, in the light of experience and so far as Gandhiji is free to guide this work.

The Congress also began to be identified more and more with the masses. Its sessions, sometime later, were to be held in villages.

A third group and ideology had crystalised itself at Patna in the shape of a new party within the Congress—the C.S.P.

In the preceding decade, the Youth Movement in Bihar, which like the earthquake had its epi-centre at Muzaffarpur, had played an important part as the spearhead of the Congress as also to spread a new socialistic laven. The C.S.P. was the coming of age of Youth Movement. It was a fusion of Gandhian policy and technique with Marxian long objectives. It attracted some of the most brilliant and selfless among our younger workers.

A peculiar genius of Bihar has been the absence of bitterness in personal relations, between leaders of different political parties. Perhaps it is instinctive imbibing of Gandhian non-violence. But it certainly makes for better understanding of common ground among parties. The minister in Bihar is as much an active village workers as a Kisan Sabhaite or a Spinners' Association man. This common kinship with the villager has kept them near one another.

All this, while the Government, with its much larger resources and machinery, had been carrying on a parallel relief system. But the machine was too wooden and not a little leaky. The picture by contrast was poor. But it was an unequal match. Neither the dispensers, nor the recipients of the official relief were motivised like those in the popular camps. The officers had neither the training, nor the necessary touch with the people to invoke co-operation and enthusiasm necessary to cope with a colossal situation. The results may be gauged from the later conditions, when a total war was to be carried on, without the help of popular Governments and popular support. The experience of the Earthquake might had given a measure of the dark days ahead, of terrible famine, epidemics, corruption, blackmarkets and their price in suffering and frustration. A vision of the picture as it might be, if the transmuting touch was still available to us is not difficult to conjure up. The Government had learnt a lesson, but with the wrong twist. When Quetta came, the popular relief agencies were ordered off the grounds.

More than a decade has now passed. New and better towns have been built. Ravages of the earthquake are hardly traceable in the towns and countryside in Bihar. But the heritage of work done in those days lives in the level of national consciousness, vitality of endeavour and resistance and the quality, number and cohesion of the village worker in Bihar. It is the miracle of the spirit of man, that what came as a great natural calamity was transformed into a perennial social reservoir and a deep and abiding renaissance.

THE CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME

Ever since the advent of Gandhiji and the transformation that had followed in the Congress, politics had taken a new meaning and content. Swaraj, according to Gandhiji was not merely the transfer of power from the British to the Indians, but a moral and material regeneration of the people both to achieve real capacity for Swaraj and to make conditions ripe for such a transfer.

The Congress now followed a triple programme that of 'Direct Action' or non-violent defiance of particular laws and that of what came to be known as 'Constructive work'. The third front, that of constitutional agitation, in the Legislatures and otherwise was a natural part of a non-violent movement, but had to be relegated to a much less important place.

The Constructive Work was mainly concerned with reconstructing the villages, where the people in India dwelt. In a country where poverty had assumed such proportions as in India, necessarily the economic programme was the main work in any scheme of uplift. "God for the masses is their bread". In the programme of economic reconstruction khadi was the pivotal item of work.

The charkha mixed up with the revolutionary doctrine of non-co-operation looked like a fad. But it was a peice of the whole set of the Gandhian idea and activity.

The Congress resolutions since non-co-operation reflect the high place accorded now to constructive work of rebuilding the villages and a new Indian people. The Congress sessions came to hold exhibitions which were a visual education in better village life and work. These sessions were themselves an object lesson in simple and clean living within the reach of the people, and were later held in gigantic camps in the country side.

Soon the work developed to a stage when separate expert organisations had to be set up to take charge of special items of work. These new organisations were an integral part of the revoluntionary machine of the Congress. The years of crisis when a Satyagraha movement moved this vast country from end to end were few and far between. Only a few were occupied in the Councils or local and central governments. The mass of the selfless and more persistent workers, that had been the main strength of the Congress, were all along busy in villages and towns in what looked like small and insignificant activity, but was building the sanctions behind the militant movements and were transforming life of the people. This work was to bring not only a transfer of power nearer, but a new order that lay beyond it.

THE A. I. S. A.

The special session of the Congress at Calcutta in 1907 had prescribed hand-spinning and weaving

of Khadi as a "measure of discipline and sacrifice for every man, woman and child" and this resolution was later clarified at Nagpur. Later the A. I. C. C. had drawn up a programme including 20 lakhs of charkhs along with a crore of men and money. After Gandhiji's arrest, the W. C. in 1922, had laid great stress on constructive work and a special department for khadi work had been set up, as an expert organisation unaffected by politics. But the Board of Trustees, which also forms the Executive Council of the Association had such first rank politicians as Gandhiji, Rajendra Babu, Vallabhbhai and Jawaharlal Nehru on it.

The work conducted by the Association extended to more than 10,000 villages even at this time and later developed more rapidly. It gave employment to more than a lakh and a half spinners, besides the weavers and other artisans connected with production of khadi.

Besides, the khadi centres were like power stations in radiating light in villages all round.

A. I. V. I. A.

Khadi was only the central item of economic regeneration of the languishing villages. There still remained all arts and crafts that make up the life of the people in the villages. To this end the Congress set up the All-India Village Industries Association at Wardha in 1934, as a self-acting, independent and non-political organisation, having for its object village reorganisation and reconstruction, including the revival of village industries and the moral and physical development of the villagers of India. A Board was set up with Dr. Kumarappa, as secretary, to work under the guidance of Gandhiji.

The Association started with an immediate programme which aimed at improving village sanitation, diet and village industries. Its main success lay in the expert research and direction that this body gave in these matters generally for the benefit of even such efforts as were being made outside its developing organisation. Its headquarters at Wardha, besides running various small industries imparted training to village workers.

Hindustani Talimi Sangh

Another great problem in India was of education. The literacy figures have been so low and stagnant chiefly on account of lack of funds in the British Indian budget for coping with this colossal work and also for the utter unsuitability of the system of instruction for the mass of Indian boys. It was once again the genius of Gandhiji which devised a new system of education—the Basic National Education.

At the Haripura session of the Congress the following resolution on national education was passed:—

"The Congress has emphasised the importance of national education ever since 1906, and during the non-co-operation period many national educational institutions were started under its auspices. The Congress attaches the utmost importance to a proper organization of mass education, and holds that all national progress ultimately depends on the method and content and objective of the education that is provided for the people. The existing system of education in India is admitted to have failed. Its objectives have been antiquated and it has been confined to a small number of people and has left the vast majority of our people illiterate. It is essential, therefore, to build up national education on a new foundation and on a nation-wide scale. As the Congress is having new opportunities of service and of influencing and controlling State education, it is necessary to lay down the basic principles which should guide such education and to take other necessary steps to give effect to them. The Congress is of opinion that for the primary and secondary stages a basic education should be imparted in accordance with the following principles:—

1. Free and compulsory education should be provided for seven years on a nation-wide scale.

2. The medium of instruction must be the mother-tongue.

3. Throughout this period education should centre round some form of manual productive work, and all other activities to be developed or training to be given should, as far as possible, be integrally related to the central handicraft chosen with due regard to the environment of the child.

"Accordingly the Congress is of opinion that an All-India Education Board to deal with this basic part of education be established and for this purpose requests and authorises Dr. Zakir Husain and Shri K. Aryanayakam to take immediate steps, under the advice and guidance of Gandhiji, to bring such a Board into existence, in order to work out in a consolidated manner a programme of basic national education and to recommend it for acceptance to those who are in control of State or private education."

"The said Board shall have power to frame its own Constitution, to raise funds and perform all such acts as may be necessary for the fulfilment of its objects."

The Hindustani Talimi Sangh (All-India Education Board) came into existence in April, 1938.

It made good progress. Two provinces, C. P. and U.P. accepted it as their official policy of primary education. Training Centres were set up by the Governments in Bihar, Orissa, Bombay, Madras, Kashmir, and other places, besides such private centres as the Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi and at Masulipatam and Gujrat, as well as schools for the children. Shri Aryanayakam and Mrs. Asha Devi, with headquarters at Wardha carried on the work of this body with zeal and ability till the War conditions put a serious limitation on the expansion of this activity, as of other constructive work.

A scheme of 'Nai Talim' was later inaugurated at Wardha, with the help of the leading educationists for educating the people of all age groups, from infancy to death. This was another name for training for a new way of life. Adult education was its more important part, and it progressed much further than the blue-print-stage.

Wardha was also the centre for such organised activity as building up the common, Hindustani, language, as India's national language.

A. I. H. S. S.

Removal of untouchability had been taken up by the Congress as one of its main work from the start of its new career. After the fast and Poona Pact, Gandhiji devoted most of his time to this work. A separate organisation and fund was organised to specially look after Harijan work, with widespread branches and some of our best social workers were put in charge of mainly this activity.

The Harijan Sevak Sangh, with its headquarters at Delhi had branches in all provinces, Shri G. D. Birla was its President and Shri A. V. Thakkar was the Gen. Secretary.

Kasturba Memorial Fund and Work

The work for the uplift of women, specially the village women was to be entrusted later to a separate organisation. The memory of Ba, as Mrs. Kasturba Gandhi was affectionately called was fittingly commemorated by raising a fund of a Crore and a half and setting up this organisation. The preliminary work of training women workers was taken up by opening several centres by its energetic secretary Mrs. Sucheta Kripalani.

Hindustani Seva Dal

In 1938, the Congress entrusted the work of training and organising volunteers to a special body, the Hindustan Seva Dal with its head quarters in the province of Karnatak. An Academy for physical culture and training was set up and training camps were opened at various places throughout the country. The Seva Dal under Dr. Hardikar played an important part in the Civil Disobedience movement, specially in enrolment of Congress members, picketting and in providing the Congress with a peaceful militia. Miss Sophia Somji (later Mrs. Sofia Khan) and Shrimati Kamala Devi Chattopadhaya played a great roll in the Seva Dal.

Besides the work done by these bodies directly, there were various other activities that drew its inspiration and guidance from Gandhiji and the Congress. Later Gandhiji while making it obligatory on Congressmen to do one or other of the Constructive Work items expanded the scope and formulated various new items that are given below in his own words and with his comments.

Gandhiji's Constructive Programme

1. *Communal Unity*: Political unity will be the natural fruit of a social revolution which will

altogether eliminate communal feelings and ways of life. To make a beginning of such a revolution every Congressman must feel his identity with everyone of the millions of the inhabitants of Hindusthan.

The Separate electorates in India have created artificial incompatibles and living unity—an unbreakable heart unity, can never come out of these artificial entities being brought together on a common platform in the legislatures. Nevertheless, Congress should put up candidates for elective bodies in order to prevent reactionaries from entering them.

2. *Removal of Untouchability*: is not merely a political necessity but something indispensable, so far as Hindus are concerned, for the very existence of Hinduism. In a spirit of non-violence Hindu Congressmen should influence the so called "Sanatanists" far more extensively than they have hitherto done. It is part of the task of building the edifice of Swaraj.

3. *Prohibition*: Medical men have to discover the ways of weaning the addicts from intoxicants. Women and students by acts of loving service have a special opportunity in advancing this reform. Congress committees can open recreation booths for the tired labour. The Constructive workers make legal prohibition easy and successful even if they do not pave the way for it.

4. *Khadi*: must be taken with all its implications. It means a wholesale swadeshi mentality, a determination to find all the necessaries of life in India and that too through the labour and intellect of the villagers.

This needs a revolutionary change in the mentality and tastes of many.

Moreover Khadi mentality means decentralisation of the production and distribution of the necessaries of life. Heavy Industries will, of course, needs be centralised and nationalised. But they will occupy the least part of the vast national activity which will mainly be in the villages. Every family with a plot of ground can grow cotton at least for family use. Every spinner would buy—if he has not his own—enough cotton for ginning, which he can easily do with a board and an iron rolling pin. For spinning Gandhiji strongly recommends the Dhunush Takli.

5. *Other Village Industries*: Village economy cannot be complete without the essential village industries such as hand-grinding, hand-pounding, soap making, paper making, match making, tanning, oil pressing etc. Congressmen can interest themselves in these.

6. *Village Sanitation*: If the majority of Congressmen were derived from our villages, as they should be, they should be able to make our villages models of cleanliness in every sense of the word.

7. *New or Basic Education*: is a big field of work for many Congressmen. This education is meant to transform village children into model villagers. It develops both the body and the mind, and keeps the child rooted to the soil with a glorious vision of the future in the realization of which he or she begins to take his or her share from the very commencement of his or her career in school. Let those who wish, put themselves in touch with the Secretary of the Sangh at Sewagram.

8. *Adult Education*: means primarily true political education of the adult by word of mouth. Side by side with the education by the mouth will be the literary education. Many methods are being tried to shorten the period of education.

9. *Education in Health and Hygiene*: The art of keeping one's health and the knowledge of hygiene is by itself a separate subject of study and corresponding practice. In a well ordered society the citizens know and observe the law of health and hygiene. No Congressman should disregard this item of the Constructive Programme.

10. *Women*: Though Satyagraha has automatically brought India's women out from their darkness, Congressmen have not felt the call to see that women become equal partners in the fight for Swaraj. It is a privilege of Congressmen to give the women of India a lifting hand, to help them to realise their full status as honoured comrades in common service.

11. *Provincial Languages*: It is inherent in Swaraj based on non-violence that every individual makes his own direct contribution to the Independence movement. The masses can do this only where every step is explained in their own languages.

12 *National Language*: Hindi is indisputably the language for all-India intercourse, because the

largest number of people already know and understand it and which others can easily pick up. Unless our love of the masses is skindeep we should spend as many months to learn Hindusthani as the years we spend over learning English.

13. *Economic Equality*: is the master key to non-violent Independence. Working for economic equality means abolishing the eternal conflict between capital and labour. It means the levelling down of the few rich in whose hands is concentrated the bulk of the nation's wealth on the one hand, and the levelling up of the semi-starved naked millions on the other. A violent and bloody revolution is a certainty one day unless there is a voluntary abdication of riches and the power that riches give and sharing them for the common good.

14. *Kisans*: When the Kisans become conscious of their non-violent strength no power on earth can resist them. But on no account they should be used for power politics. Those who would know Gandhiji's method of organising Kisans may profitably study the movement in Champaran, in Kheda, Bardoli and Barsad. Organisation round a specific wrong the Kisans understand.

15. *Labour*: Ahmedabad Labour Union is a model for all India to copy. Its basis is non-violence pure and simple. It has its hospital, its schools for the children of the mill hands, its classes for adults, its own printing press and khadi depot and its own residential quarters. It has to its credit very successful strikes which were wholly non-violent. Mill-owners and labour have governed their relations largely through voluntary arbitration.

16. *Adivasis*: Service of adivasis though occuring as the 16th number in the Constructive programme is not the least in point of importance.

17. *Lepers*: The only institution run by an Indian, as a pure labour of love, is by Sjt. Munohar Dewan near Wardha. It is working under the inspiration and guidance of Sjt. Vinoba Bhabe.

18. *Students*:

1. must not take part in party politics.
2. may not resort to political strikes.
3. must all do sacrificial spinning.
4. will be users of khadi and village products.
5. may not impose Bande Mataram or the National Flag on others.
6. will cultivate command unity.
7. should give first aid to neighbours.
8. will learn the national language, Hindusthani, in its present double dress.
9. will translate into their own mother tongue everything new they may learn and transmit it in their weekly rounds to the surrounding villages.
10. will do nothing in secret and be always ready to quell riots by non-violent conduct at the risk of their lives. And when the final heat of the struggle comes they will leave their institutions and, if need be, sacrifice themselves for the freedom of their country.
11. will be scrupulously correct and chivalrous in their behaviour towards their girl fellow-students.

The Provincial Ministeries

The Ministries in the Congress provinces, during their brief regime tried to work out economic and social programme on the lines laid down by the Congress. Through various Legislative and executive measures the ministers were able to benefit the people by such schemes as that of Prohibition, rural reconstruction, debt redemption, basic education, fostering of Hindustani language, literacy campaigns and minor improvements in tenancy Legislation and Agricultural taxation. There were of course plans for bigger changes in the way of Tenancy Systems, education and industrialisation. But these could not be carried through owing to the very limited income and powers of the Provincial Governments and also the direct and indirect interference of the old Civil Service and the Governors.

The Congress Ministries resigned in the first week of October, 39 after functioning for two years and a few months. The choice, during the War was submission to continuous interference by the Governors or conflict with them ending in dismissal. There were no resignations in Bengal, the Punjab and Sind. The

Government did not hold any fresh elections, but took over as completely autocratic head of provinces, and continued so for about five years, carrying a ruthless one-man Government.

Later, in the three provinces of Assam, Orissa and the N. W. F., Provincial Governments were reconstituted by the simple device of imprisoning a number of Congress members of legislators and thus converting a majority into a minority. In Bengal the non-Congress ministry depended entirely on the support of the large European bloc. In the Punjab and Sind, special orders were passed preventing Congress members from attending the Legislative Assemblies. Both in Assam and the Frontier Provinces, the Ministry thus artificially formed was short-lived and was overthrown on a vote of confidence.

THE NATIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Gandhian ideology of small scale and decentralised industries and village economy has influenced our ideas and endeavour deeply. But there were other tremendous influences. The west, specially the U. S. S. R. with its planned economy had presented a picture of material progress that stood in strange contest to the dire poverty of the Indian people. The Congress, after its assumptions of partial power in the provinces began to think of comprehensive economic plans, specially under the inspiration and guidance of P. Jawaharlal Nehru.

The National Planning Committee was appointed by the President of the Indian National Congress as a result of the resolution adopted by the Working Committee in July 1938. The appointment of the Planning Committee was preceded by a Conference of Ministers of Industries of Congress Provinces in Delhi. At this Conference the need for a comprehensive scheme of National Planning was expressed by every Minister. Subsequently Shri Subhas Chandra Bose, the then President of the Indian National Congress, appointed 11 members to the National Planning Committee with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as its Chairman. The Committee later co-opted further members.

The Planning Committee set down a certain minimum standard which must be aimed at within a period of 10 years in order to ensure an adequate standard of living for the masses. The national income must, therefore, be increased between 2 and 3 time within this period so as to ensure that irreducible minimum standard for everybody. To secure this it was not only necessary to increase production but also to bring about a more equitable distribution of weath. The emphasis of the Congress on cottage industries was chiefly due to its desire to have a more equitable system of distribution and to avoid the evils of indiscriminate and uncontrolled industrialism. But this view caused an apparent conflict in the minds of some between the claims of cottage industries and those of large scale indnstries. The conflict was one of emphasis.

The problem before the country, therefore, had been one of co-ordinated growth in all directions, large scale industries must supplement the cottage industries and *vice versa*. Agriculture, soil conservation, afforestation, flood control and river training, transport, improvement of livestock and fodder supply, all need to be taken up systematically and organised into a co-ordinated plan. Large scale, medium and cottage industries must be planned in order to relieve the pressure of population on the soil. Education, general and vocational and research, must also be included in order to satisfy the demands of our advancing economy. A balanced progress of the whole country required a proper distribution of our industries all over the country so that every Province and State could utilise its raw materials, employ its labour and invest its capital.

Such a scheme of planned economy was a vast undertaking and required full information and data and the willing co-operation of the technical experts, industrialists, administrators and the public. In order to mobilise these forces the N. P. C. appointed 29 Sub-Committees, on which all the available experts in the country were requisitioned, to give their advice and opinions to the main Committee. These Sub-Committees covered all aspects of our economic, social and cultural life. There were seven Sub-Committees on Agriculture, Irrigation, Crop planning, Agricultural Labour etc. Other eight Sub-Committees were appointed on Cottage and Rural Industries, Power and Fuel, Chemicals, Engineering and Manufacturing Industries etc. There was also Sub-Committees on Labour, Population, Health, Housing and Education. Five other Sub-Committees

were appointed to investigate into Trade, Finance and Currency and finally there was a Sub-Committee which deals with the social, economic and legal status of woman so that she may play her equal part in the future planned economy of India.

Besides the Congress Provincial Governments, other Provincial Governments like Bengal, Punjab and Sindh as well as some of the major States Hyderabad, Mysore, Baroda, Travancore and Bhopal co-operated with this Committee. But the Central Government took up an attitude on non-co-operation.

It became obvious that any comprehensive planning could take place only under a free national Government. But useful ground was prepared by the Committee. The attempt to plan and to visualise various national activities—economic, social, cultural fitting each other had a very highly educative value for the leaders as well as the people.



FORTY SEVENTH SESSION—Lahore, 1928

President:—PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Chairman of the Reception Committee:

Dr. Saif-ud-din Kitchlew

General Secretaries: Syed Mahmud, Sri Prakasha and Jairamdas Daulatram.



PRESIDENT

Born 1889. Educated in England. Called to the Bar. Secretary, Home Rule League, 1918. Member, A. I. C. C. since 1918. Leading non-co-operator, jailed in 1921 and 1922. General Secretary of the Congress, 1923. President Allahabad Municipality, 1924. Visited Europe and Russia 1926. Attended Congress of Oppressed Nationalities, 1927, Brussels Moved Independence resolution at Madras Congress. General Secretary of Congress 1927. President, All Indian Trade Union Congress, Jharia 1928. Secretary, Independence of India League. President National Congress, Lahore 1929. Arrested, April 1930. Released in October and again arrested. Death of Motilal Nehru. Gandhi-Irwin Truce, leads Agrarian movement in U. P. Arrested December, 1931. 2½ years R. I. Released August, 1933. Arrested February, 1934. 2 years R.I. Released September, 1935 and left for Germany where Kamala Nehru was ailing. Kamala died shortly after. President, National Congress, Lucknow, 1935 and again Faizpur 1937, whirl wind tour for Congress election success, 1936. Resigned from Working Committee, 1937. Great Anti Fascist, helped Spanish Republicans. Visited China. President, National Planning Committee. Sentenced to four years R.I. November 1940. Released December, 1941. Represented Congress in talks with Cripps. Arrested 9th August, 1942, detained at Ahmednagar Fort. Released in 1946. President All India States Conference. Head of the Interim Government 1947. Indian Premier and foreign Minister. Organised Asiatic Relation Conference, Delhi 1947, world Statesman, powerful writer, author of Autobiography. Discovery of India, etc.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

Main resolution was about independence. The entire scheme of the Nehru Report was declared to have lapsed. Declined to be represented at the proposed Round Table Conference under the existing circumstances. Congressmen were asked to resign from legislatures. Authorised A. I. C. C. to launch Civil Disobedience. The resolution on the communal question assured the minorities that "no solution would be acceptable which did not give full satisfaction to the parties concerned." Declared that every obligation and concession inherited by Independent India would be strictly subject to investigation and unjust concessions and obligations would be repudiated.

Appreciated the supreme self sacrifice of Jatindranath Das and Phougy Wizaya. Deplored the bombing of Viceregal train and congratulated Lord Irwin and party on their escape. Election for Working Committee gives place to nomination. Resolutions on Indian States, East Africa, refusal of Passports etc. Srinivasa Iyengar and Subhas Bose with their followers walked out and formed the Congress Democratic Party.

EVENTS OF THE YEAR

Working Committee, 2nd January issues Independence day Declaration. Independence Day celebrated all over the country. Gandhiji's famous eleven points. Subhas Bose sentenced to one year. All

Congress Legislators resign. Working Committee at Sabarmati in February authorises Gandhiji to start Civil Disobedience. A. I. C. C. at Ahmedabad approves, Gandhiji intimates Viceroy through Reginald Reynolds. March to Dandi starts, 12th March. Salt Law broken 6th April. Salt Satyagraha throughout the country. Congress President arrested. Shooting in Madras and Peshawar. Lathi charges the order of the day. Several new ordinances. Gandhiji arrested and detained. Working Committee at Allahabad in May enlarges scope of Civil Disobedience. Wadala and Dharsana Salt raids. 115 killed and 420 injured by firing officially till May. Martial Law in Sholapur. Congress Committees declared unlawful. Slocombe Interview. Over a lakh of people in jail. Return of R. T. C. delegates. Sapru-Jayakar pourparlers. Gandhiji and Working Committee released. Motilal's death. Gandhi-Irwin pact and general amnesty. Execution of Bhagat Singh and his comrades.

FORTYEIGHTH SESSION—Karachi, 1931

President:—SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

Chairman of the Reception Committee:
Dr. Choitram Gidwani

General Secretaries: Syed Mahmud and Jawaharlal Nehru.



PRESIDENT

Born 1875. Passed the pleader's test and started practising at Godhra. Later went to England and was called to the Bar. Shifted his practice to Ahmedabad. Flourishing lawyer. Entered public life in 1916 as an associate of Gandhiji. Came into prominence as a national leader, first at Kaira Satyagraha and later Nagpur Flag Satyagraha. President, Ahmedabad Municipality 1927-1928. Led the Bardoli no-Tax Campaign. Participated in Salt Satyagraha, and went to jail 1930. President, Indian National Congress, Karachi 1931. Arrested along with Gandhiji in January 1932, and imprisoned without trial under Regulation III of 1818 till July, 1934. Chairman, Congress Parliamentary Sub-Committee, 1935-1939. Was in charges of the Congress election machinery. Largely responsible for the success of Congress Candidates. The Chief Right Winger in the Congress. Negotiated with Thakore Shaheb in the Rajkot affair 1938-39. Was arrested and detained under defence of India Regulations 1940. Released 1941. Arrested again on the 9th August 1942 and detained in the Ahmednagar Fort. Home member Interim Government and Indian Union, 1947 played leading part in the Consambly and States Department to bring in the States.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

Recorded admiration for the bravery and sacrifice of Bhagat Singh and his comrades though disapproving of political violence. Condemned the execution of Bhagat Singh and others as an act of wanton vengeance. Condemned the Government's niggardly policy regarding the release of Politicals. Appreciated sacrifice of Ganesh Shankar Vidyarathi. Embodied Congress standpoint on Gandhi Irwin Pact. Gandhiji was authorised to represent the Congress at the Second Round Table Conference. Resolution on Fundamental Rights. Other resolutions dealt with Civil Disobedience sufferers, communal riots, prohibition, Khaddar, peaceful picketting, Frontier people, N. W. F. Province and Indians in South and East Africa. Separation of Burma was condemned but recognised the right of an independent Burma State. Noteworthy feature of the Session was the large attendance of Khudai Khitmatgars from the Frontier. The Congress was held in open air without any pandal or tent. A black flag demonstrations against

Gandhiji for not having saved Bhagat Singh's life, by a few young men.

Events of the Year

Lord Irwin gives place to Lord Willingdon. Working Committee in June. Complaints of breach of the Gandhi-Irwin Settlement from all parts of India. Gandhi-Emerson correspondence. Gandhiji decides not to go to London, 13th August. A. I. C. C. in August condemns attempted assassination of acting Governor of Bombay. New National flag decided of Saffron, White and Green colours with the Charkha inset. Gandhi leaves for Delhi. Talks between Viceroy, Gandhi, Vallabhbhai, Jawaharlal and Pattabhi. Gandhi Emerson Settlement. Gandhiji sails for England. Vallabhbhai and Bhulabhai withdraw from the Bardoli enquiry. Agrarian crisis in United Provinces. Trouble brewing in the Frontier. Gandhiji returns from London, 28th December. Jawaharlal, Sherwani and Tandon arrested. Arrest of Khan Abdul Gaffur Khan and Dr. Khan Shaheb. Gandhiji's attempt to interview Viceroy. Working Committee decides on Civil Disobedience. Gandhiji and the Congress President arrested. Ordinance Raj —lathi charges, fines, confiscations and wholesale imprisonments.

Banned Sessions, 1932 & 1933

1932

In 1932, the Congress was outlawed, but a Session of the Congress was held in April, 1932 at Delhi. Despite police vigilance, over 500 delegates attended. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, the President elect was arrested enroute. Four resolutions were passed reiterating complete Independence as the goal of the Congress, endorsing the revival of Civil Disobedience, expressing complete faith in Gandhiji's leadership and reaffirming deep faith in non-violence.

1933

In April 1933, a token session was held at Calcutta. Pandit Malaviya was again elected President but was arrested on the way. Mrs. Nellie Sen Gupta Presided, Lathi charge and arrest of delegates. The session reiterated the 1932 resolutions.

Course of Events in 1932-33.

Second Civil Disobedience Movement in 1932-33 widespread inspite of severe repression. Intense boycott of British Goods. Non-payment of rent in several places. Premier Ramsay MacDonald's Communal Award announced, 17th August; Gandhiji decides to fast unto death. Gandhi-Hoare-MacDonald correspondence. The fast starts, 20th September. Leaders of all communities in consultation among themselves and with Gandhiji. Several Temples and public places thrown open to Harijans. Yeravada Pact signed by leaders of Harijans and Hindu and Congress leaders, 24th September.

Harijans to forego separate electorates subject certain other safeguards. British Government accept the Yeravada pact. Fast broken, 26th September. Third Round Table Conference. Gandhiji's demanded restoration of opportunity to serve Harijans from jail. Guruvayur Temple Referendum. Temple opened to Harijans. Harijan Sevak Sangh organised and Harijan weekly started.

Course of Events in 1933-34

Gandhiji's self purificatory fast for 21 days. Aney, acting President of Congress suspends Civil disobedience for 6 weeks. Informal conference of Congressmen at Poona, 12th July. Gandhiji seeks interview with Viceroy but is refused. Mass Civil Disobedience suspended and individual civil disobedience allowed. Gandhiji arrested on 1st August and sentenced to one year. Fasts in Jail against refusal of facilities for Harijan work. Released 23rd August. Desides to abstain from civil disobedience till August 1934. Death of Mrs. Besant, 20th September and Vithalbhai Patel, 22nd September. Extensive tour of India by Gandhiji for Harijan work. Earthquake in Bihar and relief work. Civil Disobedience movement suspended, 7th April. Dr. Ansari, Dr. B. C. Roy and Satyamurti form the Swaraj Party. A. I. C. C. meeting at Patna. Parliamentary Programme approved. Swaraj Party becomes integral part of Congress. First Conference of Congress Socialist Party held at Patna, 17th May. Bomb thrown at Gandhiji in Poona. Gandhiji fasts for seven days against intolerance towards opponents.

FORTYNINTH SESSION—Bombay, 1934

President:—BABU RAJENDRA PRASAD

Chairman of the Reception Committee:
K. F. Nariman

General Secretaries: J. B. Kripalani, Syed Mahmud and Jairamdas Daulatram



PRESIDENT

Born 3rd December, 1884. Brilliant academic career. Professor, University Law College, 1914-1916. Later became the leader of the Bar at Patna. Member, Senate of Patna University since foundation. Collaborated with Gandhiji in Champaran Agrarian Struggle, 1917. Gave up his extensive practice in 1920. Registrar, Bihar Vidyapith. Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Gaya Congress, 1922. President Bihar Provincial Congress Committee for a number of years. Participated in the Salt Satyagraha and the Civil Disobedience movement 1930-1932 and was jailed several times. Member of the Working Committee of the Congress all through. Organised the Bihar Earthquake relief. President Indian National Congress, Bombay, October 1934. Prominent Right Winger. Member, Congress Parliamentary Sub-Committee. Acting President of the Congress 1939, after the resignation of Subhas Bose. Offered Satyagraha in the Individual Civil Disobedience Campaign. Arrested in August and detained at Patna and Hazaribagh throughout. Member Interim Government. President Constituent Assembly of India. Minister for food and agriculture of Indian Dominion Government. Reelected President by A. I. C. C. in November, 1947 on Kripalani's resignation. Great Scholar, author of India Divided and other Books. Undisputed leader of Bihar.

DETAILS OF THE SESSION

Golden Jubilee Session of the Congress. Endorsed the A. I. C. C. resolution on the Parliamentary Board and its policy and programme. Congratulated the nation on the heroic sacrifices made and the sufferings undergone. An All India Village Industries Association was set up. Congress exhibitions hereafter to be organised by A. I. S. A. and A. I. V. I. A. and not by the Reception Committee. Far-reaching changes in the Congress constitution were effected. Labour franchise and habitual wearing of Khaddar necessary for elective membership. Congress delegation reduced to a maximum of 2000. A. I. C. C. reduced to half its strength. Delegates to be elected at the rate of 1 to 500 primary members and thus made true representatives of the nation. Gandhiji sought, unsuccessfully to change the Congress creed to "truthful and non-violent" in place of "peaceful and legitimate" methods. Resolutions on constructive programme, Swadeshi, status of Indian settler's overseas. Gandhiji's resigns his Primary membership and retires from Congress.

EVENTS OF THE YEAR

All India Village Industries Association formed, 26th October. General Elections to the Central Legislative Assembly. Congress wins a majority. The Congress Party's in the Central Assembly also wins several victories. Death of Abhyankar, Sherwani and Gidwani. Government of India Act receives Royal assent. The Working Committee rejects the Act and demands a constitution drawn up by a Constituent Assembly. The Ottawa Pact denounced in the Assembly. Earthquake in Quetta. A. I. C. C. Organises relief work. Hindu Muslim Unity talks between Rajendra Prasad and Jinnah prove abortive. A. I. C. C. defines Congress attitude towards State Subjects. Gandhiji's illness. Death of Kamala Nehru.

FIFTIETH SESSION—Lucknow, 1936

President:—Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

General Secretaries: Acharya Kripalani and Jairamdas Daulatram

Details of the Session

Tributes to memory of dead patriots and greetings to prisoners. Condemned arrest of Subhas Bose, and the wide spread, intensive suppression of civil liberties. Thanked Roma'n Rolland for invitation to World Congress against War and Facism. Declared the opposition to participating in any imperial war. Expressed sympathy for Abyssinia. Considered the Government of India Act facilitated and perpetuated the domination and exploitation of the people. But Congress to contest the elections to the Provincial legislatures. Mass contact programme launched. Sympathised with Indians abroad in their disabilities. An All India Agrarian Programme decided. Declared the struggles in the States have to be carried on by the people of the States themselves.

Events of the Year

Gandhiji decides to settle down at Segaon. Gandhi Ambedkar meeting. Death of Dr. Ansari and Abbas Tyabji. Congress election Manifesto issued. Jawharlal's whirlwind election tour. Anti-Congress Parties try to form united front against the Congress. Congress Parliamentary Board begins to function.

FIFTYFIRST SESSION—Faizpur, 1937

President:—Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

Chairman of the Reception Committee:
Shankar Rao Deo

General Secretaries:
J. B. Kripalani and Jairamdas Daulatram.

Details of the Session

Declared elimination of Imperialism necessary to outlaw war. Condemned the non-intervention policy of the British Government in the Spanish struggle and assured the Spanish people of Indian sympathy. Avowed the separation of Burma was being enforced against the wishes of a large body of Burman opinion and in favour of the interests of British Imperialism. Decided for extention of self governing institutions to the excluded areas. Noted with satisfaction the election results and decided to hold an All India Convention of Congress legislators and A. I. C. C. members to decide the question of office acceptance.

Events of the Year

Gandhiji visits Travancore. General elections result in victory for Congress in eight out of eleven Provinces. A. I. C. C. in March authorises acceptance of office but ministerships not to be accepted till Congress was satisfied that Governors would not use special powers of interference. Interim Ministries.

Governors give necessary assurance and Congress ministries formed in six provinces. Muslim League declares Independence as its objective. Hindu Mahasabha also follows suit. Question of Andamans prisoners and Bengal detenues. Bombay Legislative Assembly passes Temple Entry Bill. Provincial ministries do useful work. Ministerial crisis in United Provinces and Bihar on Governor's interference in release of political prisoners. Crisis resolved later.

FIFTYSECOND SESSION—Haripura, 1938

President :—Subhas Chandra Bose

Chairman of the Reception Committee :

Darbar Gopaldas Desai

General Secretary : J. B. Kripalani



President

Born in 1897. Entered the Indian Civil Service but resigned to join the non-co-operation movement in 1921. Arrested along with Deshbandhu Das 1921-1922. Manager, "Forward", 1922-1924. Member, Calcutta Corporation and Bengal Legislative Council, 1924. Chief Executive Officer, Calcutta Corporation 1924. Arrested under Regulation III in 1924, released in 1927. Took prominent part in the Simon Commission Boycott. G. O. C. of Volunteers at Calcutta Congress 1928. Mayor of Calcutta 1930. President, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee for many years. Participated in the salt Satyagraha and was jailed. In 1932 interned as State Prisoner, but released and asked to go to Europe for medical treatment. President, Indian National Congress, Haripura 1938. Re-elected President, Tripuri Session 1939, but resigned due to differences with the Congress High Command. Inaugurated the Forward Bloc. Was elected member of the Central Assembly while in Prison, 1940. Was subsequently released due to ill health. Missing from his Calcutta residence since 26th January, 1941. Escape to Germany and later to the eastern front. Set up an Independent Indian Government and the I. N. A. Reported to have died in air crash. Became most popular nationalist leader as "Netaji".

Details of the Session

Main resolution was on Federation. Reiterated its condemnation of the proposed Federal Scheme. Dealt with National education and appointed an All India Education Board on basic national education. Assured the minorities of the widest scope for their development. Deprecated the ban on Congress organisations in Midnapur. Demanded release of Guidallo of Assam. Manifesto on Ministerial resignation in Bihar and U. P. Declared that struggles in Indian States must not be undertaken in the name of the Congress but assured the States People of its solidarity with them. Declared that Congress cannot associate itself with any activities incompatible with its basic principles while approving of Kisan Sabhas in General. Set up a Constitution Committee. Resolution on Indians overseas, Zanzibar and clove boycott, Indians in Ceylon, China, Palestine. The Congress stand with regard to foreign policy and war Danger was repeated.

Events of the Year

Gandhiji tours the North West Frontier. C. P. Cabinet crisis. Dr. Khare resigns and other Ministers are dismissed. The Working Committee condemns the action of Dr. Khare and A. I. C. C. takes disciplinary action against him. Gandhiji condemns role of

C. P. Governor. Non-interference in affairs of Indian States reiterated. Conference of Provincial Ministers at Delhi. National Planning Committee starts deliberations under presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru. Great strides in work of the Congress Ministries. Death of Maulana Saukat Ali. Presidential election contest between Subhas Chandra and Dr. Pattabhi. Subhas's Victory. Gandhiji's comment thereon in the Harijan. Civil disobedience in Rajkot and its suspension. Gandhiji goes to Rajkot on peace mission. Fast unto death 3rd March. Viceroy's intervention sought. Maurice Gwyer appointed arbitrator.

FIFTYTHIRD SESSION—Tripuri, 1939

President:—Subhas Chandra Bose

Chairman of the Reception Committee:
Seth Govind Das

General Secretary: J. B. Kripalani.

Details of the Session:

Subhas attends session on a stecher. Main resolution was moved by Govind Vallabh Pant. Declared its implict confidence in Gandhiji and the old Working Committee and requested the President to appoint the new Working Committee in accordance with the wishes of Gandhiji. Stormy debate. Resolution carried by large majority. Called upon all Congress organisations to get ready for a nation wide struggle, promote unity and eliminate disruptive forces. A. I. C. C. authorised to make changes in Congress Constitution to make the organisation efficient. Disapproved of and dissociated itself from British foreign policy. Welcome to the Wafd delegation. Resolutions on happenings in palestine; conditions of Indians overseas.

Events of the Year

Gwyer's award in the Rajkot dispute. Gandhiji decides to renounce the Award. A. I. C. C. at Calcutta. Stormy scenes. Subhas Bose resigns Presidentship. Babu Rajendra Prasad elected in his place. Old Working Committee reappointed. Gandhiji apologies for coercive conduct in Rajkot. Subhas Bose inaugurates Forward Block, 21st May. Working Committee at Wardha notices war danger. Disciplinary action against Subhas for three years. Defence of India Bill Passed in Central Assembly. War in Europe. Gandhiji's interview with Viceroy. Working Committee at Wardha, 8th September. Sub-Committee appointed to deal with situation created by War. Viceroy's talks with Rajendra Prasad and Nehru. A. I. C. C. at Wardah 9th October supports Working Committee stand. Congress Ministers resign. Constitution suspensed. Working Committee at Wardha 22nd December calls for intense constructive work. Gandhiji's interview with Viceroy.

FIFTYFOURTH SESSION—Ramgarh, 1940

President:—Moulana Abul Kalam Azad

General Secretary: Acharya J. B. Kripalani

Details of the Session

The overwhelming question before Ramgarh Session was the crisis brought about by the war. It passed only one resolution on that all absorbing question. Heavy rainstorm results in break up of the Session.

BOOK VI

WAR YEARS AND AFTER



CONGRESS AND THE WAR CRISIS

CHAPTER XXV

The history of critical years of World War II in India is important in several ways. It gives us the immediate background of the events that culminated in our emancipation and in Pakistan. It showed the moral fibre and mind of India in time of crisis, its unflinching stand for its own freedom and for democracy and its opposition to war as such and to all shapes of fascism. The war revealed imperialism in its naked form, when the Churchillian Government played with the safety of not only its own country but its allies but constantly evaded the Indian demand.

The Congress position with regard to war is summed up by Acharya Kripalani, then the General Secretary of the Congress, till we come to Ramgarh. There was only one, the war, question at Ramgarh and the long resolution of Ramgarh Session on the War gives the attitude of the Congress. After that it was, it would seem, a trial of wits between the Congress trying to steer a right course between resistance to British evasion and anxiety to be on the side of the allies, and the Government in passing off shiboleths and magnifying and building up the Muslim obstacle as represented by Mr. Jinnah. Cripps proposals were the last of these 'Offers', and was replied by 'Quit India'. The Congress thereafter was buried, but like the seeds that sprout in the spring. The Congress was now bigger and wider than its leaders and Committees and was coextent with the masses. The upsurge that followed in 1942 was spontaneous and beyond all calculation. This upsurge gave a true measure of the strength of the national movement to its friends and foes, and paved the way for the new era after the war.

POSITION BEFORE RAMGARH

Shri J. B. Kripalani

THE principles which should guide the nation in the event of war were clearly laid down by the Congress in its resolutions passed from time to time. It had repeatedly declared its entire disapproval of the ideology and practice of Fascism and Nazism with all their cruel implications. It had expressed in unmistakable terms its sympathy with all those countries which were from time to time made the victims of unprovoked aggression. It expressed its solidarity with the democratic forces in Spain. It protested against the conquest and annexation of Czechoslovakia. As a natural corollary the Congress dissociated itself entirely from the foreign policy of the British Government

which was considered responsible for these tragedies.

The Congress had further laid down, that the issue of war and peace for India, must be decided by the Indian people and any attempt by an outside authority to impose its decision on India or exploit Indian resources for the purpose of war would be resisted. But the British Government paid no heed to these repeated declarations and warnings of the Congress. The attempt to amend the Government of India Act in order to narrow and limit still further the powers of the Provincial Governments in the event of war emergency arising, the despatch of Indian troops towards Aden, and some months later troops to Singapore And Aden without the consent of the Central Legislature, unmistakably showed Britain's desire to entangle India in a future war. To mark their dissociation from these measures and to give effect to the policy of the Congress the Working Committee at its meetings at Wardha in August 1939 called upon Congress members of the Central Legislative Assembly to refrain from attending the next session of the Assembly. The Provincial Governments were directed not to assist in any way the war preparation of the British Government which were on foot.

As soon as war broke out in Europe, India was declared a belligerent country on the side of Allies by the British Government. This declaration was made without consulting the people of India. Ordinances strictly curtailing civil liberties were passed. The Government of India Act was amended greatly restricting the already limited powers of the Provincial Government.

The sympathies of the country generally, were with the Allies and against Germany and the fascist ideology guiding it. But sympathy did not necessarily mean India's entanglement in war and that too without her consent. What should be India's attitude in the crisis was a question pre-eminently for the Indian people to answer. But Imperialism thought and acted otherwise. The Indian people however were in no mood to acquiesce in this imposition and the Government knew it. The Viceroy, therefore, only two days after the declaration of the war, called Mahatma Gandhi for an interview to explain the situation and enlist his moral support and through him that of the Congress and country. Gandhiji took the public into confidence about what happened at the interview. He said he had made it clear to Viceroy that in whatever he said, he did not represent the Congress or the national mind.

As a humanitarin he was greatly stirred by the war. Though his sympathies were with the Allies, he did not want the destruction of any people. He was not at the time thinking of Indian deliverance. What would Indian freedom be worth, if Britain was destroyed or Germany humiliated? His own sympathies were with England and France from the purely humanitarian view-point.

The working Committee however soon met at Wardha, and considered the situation. Having regard to the gravity of the issue involved, the President invited Shri Gandhiji, Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhas Chandra Bose, Narendra Deo, Jayprakash Narain and Aney to assist the Working Committee in shaping their decision. Mr. M. A. Jinnah was also telegraphically invited to attend and give the Committee the benefit of his advice. He however, declined the invitation owing to previous engagements. After mature deliberations the working Committee issued a comprehensive statement defining the Congress position.

The statement reiterated the principles laid down by the Congress from time to time for guiding the nation in the event of war. It said that India was declared a belligerent country and measures taken affected the country virtually in defiance of the declared wishes of the people. The Working Committee took the gravest view of these developments. While it unhesitatingly condemned the latest aggression of the Nazi Government and sympathised with those who resisted it, its co-operation could not be had by compulsion and imposition. Co-operation must be between equals and by mutual consent for a cause which both consider to be worthy.

The Committee were aware that the Governments of Great Britain and France had declared that they were fighting for freedom and to put an end to aggression. During the war of 1914-18 also the declared war-aims were the preservation of Democracy, self-determination and the freedom of small nations and yet the very governments which solemnly proclaimed these aims entered into secret pacts embodying Imperialist designs for the carving up of the Ottoman empire. If the war is to defend the status quo, Imperialist possessions, colonies, vested interests and privileges then India can have nothing to do with it. If however, the issue is democracy and a world-order based on democracy then India is intensely interested in it. The Committee were convinced that the interests of Indian democracy did not conflict with the interests of British people. If Britain fights for the maintenance and extension of democracy, then she must necessarily end imperialism in her own possession, establish full democracy in India, and the Indian people must have the right of self-determination by framing their own constitution through a Constituent Assembly without external interference and must guide their own policy. A free democratic India will gladly associate herself with other free nations for mutual defence against aggression and for economic co-operation.

The Working Committee therefore, invited the British Government to declare in unequivocal terms what their war-aims are in regard to democracy and imperialism and the new order that is envisaged and in particular, how these aims are going to apply to India and to be given effect to in the present. Do they include the elimination of imperialism and the treatment of India as a free nation whose policy will be guided in accordance with the wishes of her people? A clear declaration about the future, pledging the Government to the ending of Imperialism and Fascism alike, will be welcomed by the people of all countries, but it is far more important to give immediate effect to it, to the largest possible extent for only this will convince the people that the declaration is meant to be honoured. The real gist of any declaration is its application in the present, for it is the present that will govern action to-day and give shape to the future.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru was nominated to the Working Committee and a War Sub-Committee consisting of Pandit Jawaharlal (Chairman), Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was formed to deal with the situation as it may develop from time to time.

Gandhiji in a statement to the press commended the manifesto of the Working Committee to the unanimous support of the country. He hoped that all the political parties and all communities will join the Committee's demand for a clear declaration of their policy from the British Government with such corresponding action as is possible amidst martial conditions. "All that was required was a mental revolution on the part of British Statesmen i. e., honest action to implement the declaration of faith in democracy made on the eve of the war, and still being repeated from British platform. The Congress support will mean the greatest moral asset in favour of England and France. The Congress has no soldiers to offer."

The statement was widely appreciated in the country as a statesman-like document. It received publicity in foreign countries, especially in America and Germany. The people of the oppressed nationalities adopted the manifesto as their own. The British Government in England, however and a considerable section of the British press took care to give it the minimum possible publicity. But the more advanced section of the British opinion welcomed the document and warmly supported the Congress demand for a declaration of war-aims and peace aims of Great Britain.

Considering the gravity and magnitude of the crisis facing the country it was felt necessary that a special meeting of the A. I. C. C. be called to consider the manifesto issued by the Working Committee. A meeting was called accordingly at Wardha on October 9 and 10. The A. I. C. C. passed a resolution endorsing the statement of the Working Committee.

The British Government and its agents here could not possibly ignore this challenge of the Congress. Some answer had to be given. The Viceroy had recourse to interviews. These were not confined to the representatives of the Congress and the Muslim League but to all sorts of persons and parties. He had as many as 52 interviews to help him to frame an answer to the simple and straightforward question the Congress has asked. Fortified by so many opinions the Viceroy declared in no uncertain terms the imperial will of Britain. The Viceroy's declaration was couched in the usual bureaucratic style. It lacked understanding and imagination. It was condemend even by non-Congress circles.

The Viceroy before answering the specific questions in the Working Committee statement referred to the "so many different points of view revealed, marked differences of outlook, markedly different demands, and markedly different solutions, for the problems that lie before us." It appeared as though 52 people were called to enable the Viceroy to remind a forgetful world of the differences and divisions which were hampering the good intentions of the British Government with regard to India.

The declaration then sought to throw some light on the following matters: (i) objectives of His Majesty's Government in the war (ii) intention of the British Government with regard to the future of India and (iii) closer association of the Indian opinion with the prosecution of the war.

The declaration was so complete a denial of all that the Working Committee asked for and hoped for in their statement that Gandhiji was constrained to declare "the Congress has asked for bread and was given a stone".

The Working Committee which met at Wardha on October 22, considered the Viceregal declaration. They passed resolution recording their opinion that the Viceregal statement was wholly unsatisfactory and calculated to rouse resentment among all those who were anxious to gain and are intent upon gaining India's independence. The Committee regarded the mention of internal differences as a screen to hide the true intention of Great Britain. What the Committee had asked for was a declaration of war-aims as a test of British bona fides regarding India, irrespective of the attitude of opposing parties and groups. "The Congress had always stood for the amplest guarantee of the fights of minorities. The freedom the Congress claimed was not for the Congress or any particular group or community but for the nation and for all communities in India that go to build that nation. In the circumstances, the Congress cannot possibly give any support to Great Britain for it would amount an endorsement of the imperialist policy which the Congress has always fought to end. As a first step in this direction the Committee calls upon the Congress Ministries to tender their resignations.

The Committee appealed to the nation to end all internal controversies in this hour of grave crisis and act unitedly in the cause of India's freedom. It called upon all Congress Committees and Congressmen to be prepared for all eventualities.

Soon the Congress ministries resigned. Their resignation changed the political situation in the country. It proclaimed the dissociation of political India from the Imperialistic policies of Great Britain specially with the war that was going on in Europe. It was a big step towards non-co-operation. India withdrew her conditional moral support from the struggle Britain was waging against Hitler. The provincial part of the Government of India Act—the Federal part was still-born—was now dead beyond possibility of resurrection.

The resignation of the Ministries demonstrated to all those who had doubt that the Congress was not out for power and office but for the emancipation of the people of India from foreign yoke. The Ministries had done good work. Several reform measures for the amelioration of the lot of the masses were pending before provincial assemblies. With their resignation these measures had little chance of being enacted. There was also the danger of the good already



Prabhavati (Mrs. J. P. Narain), as Captain of Lady Volunteers annoints Bapu. Ceremony in Congress Nagar



Scene in Congress Nagar



The Khadi Exhibition



Khudai Khidamatgar Rally



Deshsevikas

done being undone. But Congress rose to its revolutionary height. It refused to allow small ameliorative reforms to stand in the way of the march of the country to its goal of Purna Swaraj.

However the situation created by the resolution of the Working Committee and the resignation of the Congress Ministries was not such as could be relished by the British Government. A sullen, discontented, rebel India was poor propaganda against Hitler. It reduced to mockery all the fine phrases about peace and democracy mouthed by British statesmen.

To retrieve the position the India Secretary and Sir Samuel Hoare spoke in the Houses of Parliament. They employed sweeter language but in effect said the same things that had been badly said by the Viceroy. As a result of these statements the Viceroy called Gandhiji, the Congress President and Mr. Jinnah for interviews. He told the visitors that he was prepared to modify his previous statement to the extent that instead of an Advisory Committee for the conduct of war his Government was prepared to expand the Executive Council of the Viceroy and find in it place for some popular leaders, on condition that the Congress would come to and agreement with Mr. Jinnah not only about the proposed changes in the Central Executive but also about the Government in the provinces. Babu Rajendra Prasad, on behalf of the Congress made it clear to the Viceroy that it was not possible for Congress to co-operate unless the policy of the British Government was made clear on the lines suggested by the Congress.

The deadlock therefore continued. The Working Committee which met in Allahabad on November 19-25, 1939 approved of and endorsed the reply of the Congress President to the Viceroy.

"The Congress had looked upon the War crisis and the problem it raises essentially as a moral issue and has not sought to profit by it in any spirit of bargaining." The Committee declared again that the recognition of Indian independence and of the right of her people to frame their constitution through a Constituent Assembly, is essential in order to remove the taint of imperialism from Britain's policy and to enable the Congress to consider further co-operation. "The Assembly could frame a constitution in which the rights of accepted minorities would be protected to their satisfaction and in the event of some matters relating to minority rights not being mutually agreed to, they can be referred to arbitration."

The Constituent Assembly should be elected on the basis of adult sufferage, existing separate electorates being retained for such minorities as desire them. The number of members in the Assembly should reflect the numerical strength. The answer to this demand has been entirely unsatisfactory. The communal pleas advanced in justification of this refusal are only attempt to befog the moral issue. The minorities do not oppose India's right to Freedom and Independence. As for the Indian Princes, they are the creation of the Paramount power and identical with it. It is the people of the Indian States which should have a determining voice in the shaping of a Free India.

The policy of non-co-operation was, therefore to continue.

RAMGARH SESSION AND AFTER

"For thirteen years the Congress had been crying wolf-wolf and at last the wolf emerged from its wanderings in the wilderness into the abode of man to convert the lands flowing with milk and honey into scenes of confusion and carnage and the green crops and happy habitations of civil life into the scorched earth of the military. Ramgarh is the first Congress that, since Satyagraha began to rule the destinies of the Nation, witnessed a war in being. The Congress had passed many resolutions warning the country against the participation in all war effort and when the nation met at Ramgarh they had already seen through over six months of this horrible holocaust and were cogitating as to how best to

shape the duty of India at this juncture, consistently with its cult of non-violence. Much water had already flowed under the bridges and the setting for the Ramgarh Congress was materially different from that which had ushered in, year after year, each of the previous sessions. The sound of the war drums was almost audible through the forest region in the midst of which Ramgarh with its hills and dales, its valleys and streams was situated."[1]

Ramgarh was the first session that met after the outbreak of the war and the only one that could meet during its pendency. Its sole occupation was with regard to the position of the country in this crisis. The Presidential address, the Subjects Committee, as well as the one single resolution that was passed in this session, was to summarise the past, survey the present and foreshadow the future in this context. The following is the text of the resolution passed at the open session of the Ramgarh Congress held in march 1940 :

Resolution on India and the War Crisis

(Ramgarh Session 1940)

This Congress, having considered the grave and critical situation resulting from the war in Europe and British policy in regard to it, approves of and endorses the resolutions passed and the action taken on the war situation by the A. I. C. C. and the Working Committee. The Congress considers the declaration by the British Government of India as a belligerent country, without any reference to the people of India, and the exploitation of India's resources in this War, as an affront to them, which no self-respecting and freedom-loving people can accept or tolerate. The recent pronouncements made on behalf of the British Government in regard to India demonstrate that Great Britain is carrying on the War fundamentally for imperialist ends and for the preservation and strengthening of her Empire, which is based on the exploitation of the people of India, as well as of other Asiatic and African countries. Under these circumstances, it is clear that the Congress cannot in any way, directly or indirectly, be party to the War, which means continuance and perpetuation of this exploitation. The Congress therefore strongly disapproves of Indian troops being made to fight for Great Britain and of the drain from India of men and material for the purpose of the War. Neither the recruiting nor the money raised in India can be considered to voluntary contributions from India. Congressmen, and those under the Congress influence, cannot help in the prosecution of the War with men, money or material.

The Congress hereby declares again that nothing short of complete independence can be accepted by the people of India. Indian freedom cannot exist within the orbit of imperialism, and dominion or any other status within the imperial structure is wholly inapplicable to India, is not in keeping with the dignity of a great nation, and would bind India in many ways to British policies and economic structure. The people of India alone can properly shape their own constitution and determine their relations to the other countries of the world, through a Constituent Assembly elected on the basis of adult suffrage.

The Congress is further of opinion that while it will always be ready, as it ever has been to make every effort to secure communal harmony, no permanent solution is possible except through a Constituent Assembly, where the rights of all recognised monorities will be fully protected by agreement, as far as possible, between the elected representatives of various majority and minority groups, or by arbitration if agreement is not reached on any point. Any alternative will lack finality. India's constitution must be based on independence, democracy and national unity, and the Congress repudiates attempts to divide India or to split up her nationhood. The Congress has always aimed at a constitution where the fullest freedom and opportunities of development are guaranteed to the group and the individual and social injustice yields place to a juster social order.

1. History of the Indian National Congress by Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya.

The Congress cannot admit the right of the Rulers of Indian States, or of foreign vested interests to come in the way of Indian freedom. Sovereignty in India must rest with the people, whether in the States or the Provinces, and all other interests must be subordinated to their vital interests. The Congress holds that the difficulty raised in regard to the States is of British creation and it will not be satisfactorily solved unless the declaration of the freedom of India from foreign rule is unequivocally made. Foreign interests, if they are not in conflict with the interests of the Indian people, will be protected.

The Congress withdrew the Ministries from the Provinces where the Congress had a majority in order to dissociate India from the War and to enforce the Congress determination to free India from foreign domination. This preliminary step must naturally be followed by Civil Disobedience, to which the Congress will unhesitatingly resort as soon as the Congress Organisation is considered fit enough for the purpose, or in case circumstances so shape themselves as to precipitate a crisis. The Congress desires to draw the attention of Congressmen to Gandhiji's declaration that he can only undertake the responsibility of declaring Civil Disobedience when he is satisfied that they are strictly observing discipline and are carrying out the constructive programme prescribed in the Independence Pledge.

The Congress seeks to represent and serve all classes and communities without distinction of race or religion, and the struggle for Indian independence is for the freedom of the whole nation. Hence the Congress cherishes the hope that all classes and communities will take part in it. The purpose of Civil Disobedience is to evoke the spirit of sacrifice in the whole nation.

The Congress hereby authorises the All India Congress Committee and in the event of this being necessary, the Working Committee, to take all steps to implement the foregoing resolution, as the Committee concerned may deem necessary.

AFTER RAMGARH

In the post-Ramgarh period, with the deterioration in the war situation fast developing, Lord Zetland was replaced by Lord Ammery in the Churchillian Cabinet as Secretary of States for India, and the antagonism of Mr. Churchill and Mr. Ammery to Indian freedom became manifest by their various declarations and "offers". The Congress was not, in the meanwhile content only with resolutions and statements. Under Gandhiji's direction, feverish activities were being made by the Provincial Congress Committees to prepare the Satyagraha army by constructive work. Sri R. S. Pandit toured the provinces for organisation work. But the Congress and also the Government were cautious not to take a premature offensive in a highly critical time.

The Working Committee was meeting regularly to cope with the daily changing situation. Events were moving at lightning speed. The fall of France was announced on 14th June while the Working Committee was in session at Wardha. After long cogitation the Committee made another offer of co-operation in war efforts, even rejecting Gandhiji's stand on non-violence. At Delhi, a fortnight after, a similar resolution was passed.

The resolution of the Working Committee passed at Delhi on July 7th was later confirmed by the AICC at Poona on 27th and 28th July, 1940 and came to be known as the Poona Offer. The Congress lowered its demands asking for a provisional National Government at Centre, 'such as to command the confidence of all the elected members elements in the Central Assembly' and offered co-operation in defence measures. For the first time there was a parting of ways between the Congress and Gandhiji, who stood for non-violence even in war.

This was replied by the Viceroy by the 'August Offer'. He dwelt on the 'differences which had prevented the achievement of national unity' among political parties, and offered to

expand the Executive Council and establish an War Advisory Council, expressing the anxiety of HMG for the minorities view point.

The Congress Working Committee at Wardha expressed its indignation on this and other statements made on behalf of the British Government, rejected the offer and called upon the people to condemn the Government attitude. Gandhiji also made a statement expressing his disappointment.

Individual Satyagraha

In September, 1940, the AICC resolved that the self-imposed restraint of the Congress could not be carried to the extent of self-extinction. It was decided to launch Satyagraha in support of the modest demand and issue of freedom of speech, under Gandhiji's lead and guidance. He decided that the campaign must not expand into 'mass action', for that would 'embarass' war activity : it was to be simply a 'moral protest'.

On October 17, 1940, individual satyagraha commenced and Vinobha Bhave was the first nominee. He addressed a meeting in the village of Paunar.

Pandit Nehru was to follow him but he was arrested on October 31, 1940, and was sentenced to 4 years' imprisonment.

This campaign was of a most restricted character so that the British Government might not be embarrassed in their hour of trial. The list of satyagrahis scrupulously eliminated those who did not fully conform to the strict tests set by Mahatma Gandhi. They were to send a written notice to the District Magistrate, that they intended delivering a speech. In practice, they were clapped into prison before they made any speech.

The campaign went on smoothly for 14 months. There was no attempt directly to interfere with the Government's war effort. Many of the leaders were later released. The war was drawing near India's border.

The Cripps Mission

The spectacular success of Japan and the pressure of the allies of Britain, during the early months of 1942 forced the British Government to make serious attempt to end the deadlock in India. On March 11, 1942, Mr. Churchill announced that Sir Stafford Cripps, a member of the War Cabinet, would go to India to explain certain constitutional proposals accepted by His Majesty's Government and 'to satisfy himself upon the spot, by personal consultation.' Sir Stafford Cripps arrived at Delhi on March 22, 1942, and left Karachi for London on April 13, 1942.

The declaration of the British Government contained the following provisions:

(1) An elected constitution-making body would be set up in India after the war.

(2) Provision would be made for the participation of the Indian States in the above Constitution-making body.

(3) The British Government would accept and implement the Constitution-making body's but

(a) any Province of British India should have the right to reject the new constitution, and either to retain its existing constitutional position or to frame another constitution by agreement with the British Government, provision being made for its subsequent accession to the India Union if it so desired.

(b) the Constitution-making body should conclude a treaty with the British Government, covering all matters arising out of the transfer of power and also for the protection of racial and religious minorities, but containing no restriction on the power of the Indian Union to decide its future relationship to other member States of the British Commonwealth.

(4) Revision of treaties with Indian States would be necessary.

(5) The Constitution-making body would be composed as follows, unless Indian leaders agreed upon some other form:—

(a) Provincial elections would be held at the end of the war. The members of the newly-elected Lower Houses of Provincial Legislatures would elect the Constitution-making body by the system of proportional representation. The new body would be in number about one-tenth of the Lower Houses of Provincial Legislatures.

(b) Indian States would 'appoint' representatives in the same proportion to their total population as in the case of representatives of British India.

(6) Until the new constitution could be framed the British Government would remain responsible for the defence of India, but the British Government 'desired and invited the immediate and effective participation of the leaders of the principal sections of the Indian people in the counsels of their country, of the Commonwealth and of the United Nations.'

It will be seen that what the Declaration offered India was a promise, a promise that was not to be fulfiled at once, but only in future. Mahatmaji is said to have remarked that it was 'a post-dated cheque on a crashing bank.' Secondly, the provision about the non-accession of Provinces to the Indian Union was a direct encouragement to, if not a clear acceptance of, the demand for Pakistan. Thirdly, the arrangement about defence was quite unacceptable to the Congress. On April 2, 1942, the Working Committee adopted a resolution explaining the causes of its rejection of the Cripps Scheme. It was observed: "To take away defence from the sphere of responsibility at this stage is to reduce that responsibility to a farce and a nullity, and to make it perfectly clear that India is not going to be free in any way and her Government is not going to function as a free and independent Government during the pendency of the war." In his 'Discovery of India' Pandit Nehru makes it clear that Lord Linlithgow and the Civil Service sabotaged the Cripps Plan. In its final stage, he says, the plan came to mean that "the existing structure of Government would continue exactly as before, the autocratic powers of the Viceroy would remain, and a few of us could become his liveried camp-followers and look after canteens and the like." Obviously it was 'inconceivable and impossible' for the Congress leaders "to accept this position at any time and more specially at that time."

The rejection of the plan by the Congress was followed by its rejection by the League. It expressed satisfaction at the 'recognition of Pakistan by implication', but objection was taken to the inadequacy of the right of non-accession given to the Provinces. It was declared that the Muslims could not take part in one Constitution-making body for the whole of India and the demand for Pakistan was reiterated.



A SUMMARY OF NOTABLE EVENTS IN THE WAR YEARS AND AFTER

1940

Death of Deenabandhu Andrews. Gandhiji's long talk with Viceroy, 2nd July. Working Committee at Delhi repudiates non-violence against foreign aggression. Demand for National Government. Gandhiji absolved of responsibility of leadership of Congress. Subhas Bose arrested. Abdul Gaffar Khan resigns from Working Committee. Poona Session of the A. I. C. C. 25th. July. Viceroy offers expanded Executive Council. Congress rejects. With the approval of the Working Committee (October) Gandhiji launches individual civil dis-obedience. Muslim League passes Pakistan resolution at Lahore Session.

1941-1942

Throughout 1941, the Individual civil dis-obedience movement continued. Working Committee and A. I. C. C. meet at Wardha in January when Gandhiji agreed to lead the Congress on its own terms. Chiang Kai Shak's visit and meeting with Gandhiji. Cripps Mission announced. March 11. Gandhiji meets Cripps, March 27 Proposals, "a post dated cheque." Rejected by all Indian Parties for different reasons. April A. I. C. C. at Allahabad rejects Rajaji's Pakistan proposal. A. I. C. C. offices raided. "Quit India" articles in Harijan. Resolution passed by Working Committee, July 6. A. I. C. C. at Bombay August 8 passes Quit India resolution. Gandhiji and Working Committee members and top Congressmen arrested before day break, August 9. Congress Committees declared illegal. Gandhiji's letter to Linlithgow, 14th. Mahadeb Desai dies in Prison, 14th. Prof. Bhansali starts fast against Chimur atrocities. Dr. S. P. Mukherji resigns ministership.

1943

All India Press Hartal on January 6 as protest against restrictions. Gandhiji starts 21 days fast, February 10. "Congress Responsibility for Disturbances" published. Sir H. P. Mody, N. R. Sarkar and M. S. Aney resign from Viceroy's Executive Council on the question of Gandhiji's fast. Crisis in Gandhiji's life, February 21. Fast completed March 3. Death of Sri Satyamurti. Philips reveals he was refused permission to see Gandhiji April 25. Non-party leaders demand for impartial tribunal and for release of Gandhiji and Congress leaders. Government refuses to forward letter from Gandhiji to Jinnah. Wavell appointed Viceroy, June 18. Kasturba Gandhi develops heart attack. Question raised in House of Lords. Government's refusal to release Kasturba.

1944

Kasturba passes away on Shivaratri day at Aga Khan Palace, February 22. Nation wide mourning. Hartal and Kasturba day. Government Communique about Gandhiji's illness, April 6. Agitation all over India for Gandhiji's release. Gandhiji released "solely on medical grounds", May 6. Gandhiji arrives at Bombay, May 11. Devastating explosions in Bombay dockyard. Gandhiji-Linlithgow correspondence published by Government. Gandhiji's letter to Viceroy. Viceroy replies a meeting could have no value. Rajaji proposals for Congress-League settlement. Gelder interview. Gandhiji's offer to Government. India debate in House of Commons, July 28. Gandhiji-Jinnah correspondence released. Gandhiji returns to Wardha. Gandhiji asks underground Congress workers to discover themselves to police. Many respond. A.I.S.A. Meeting at Wardha. Gandhiji's proposals to revolutionise Khadi work. Gandhi-Jinnah pourparlers, prove abortive. Nearly one and half crores collected for Kasturba Memorial fund.

1945

Talks between Bhulabhai Desai and Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan to form a provisional Government at the Centre. Sapru Committee carries on work collecting memoranda. In February the Bihar Govt. interns some prominent Congress leaders. Hidayatulla Ministry defeatad on a no-confidence motion. On March 12, the Frontier Ministry of Sardar Aurangazeb Khan defeated and on March 16 Dr. Khan Shaheb forms a Congress Ministry. The Nazimuddin Ministry in Bengal defeated in the Budget Session. Governor takes over the administration of the Province under Sec. 93 A. Support of the Congress for the new Sandulla Ministry. Lord Wavell leaves for London to confer with the British Cabinet about the war with Japan and political deadlock in India.



CHAPTER XXVI

'QUIT INDIA'

1. GENESIS OF 'QUIT INDIA'

THE Cripps-Congress talks had raised public expectations and excitement to a high pitch and there was widely felt disappointment at the failure and the sudden change in the attitude of Mr. Cripps.

Soon after the departure of Cripps, Gandhiji decided that time for sterner policy and programme had come. The Japanese were knocking at India's gates. The suffering of the people on account of the war conditions and a prevailing misgovernment were becoming unbearable. The attitude of the British Government did not show any change of heart. Gandhiji once again took up a revolutionary new stand on the straight idea of Quit India. He started a campaign in his weekly paper, Harijan holding forth this idea. Gandhiji felt "convinced that the British presence is the incentive for the Japanese attack". "I am convinced that the time has come for the British and the Indians to be reconciled to complete separation from each other". "Complete and immediate orderly withdrawal of the British from India at least in reality..... will at once put the Allied cause on a completely moral basis." "The first condition of British Success is the undoing of the wrong". "I ask every Briton to support me in my appeal to the British at this hour to retire from every Asiatic and African possession. And when one puts morals, in the scales, there is nothing but gain to Britain, India and the world". "India does not belong to Indians. It has been called a British Possession. No contribution made to a conqueror can be truly described as voluntary".

"The all-pervading distrust and falsity makes life worthless unless one resists it with one's whole soul." "I ask for a bloodless end of an unnatural domination and for a new era." "Leave India to God and if that be too much, leave her to anarchy." "The beauty and the necessity for withdrawal lies in its being immediate." Gandhiji further elaborated how there should be unadulterated non-violent non-cooperation against the Japanese and advised people not to give quarter to them and to be ready to risk loss of several million lives. He reminded how he used to say that his moral support was entirely with Britain but "today my mind refuses to give that moral support. Both Britain and America lack the moral basis for engaging in this war unless they put their houses in order. They have no right to talk about protecting democracies and civilisation until the

canker of white superiority is destroyed in its entirety." "People must not on any account lean on the Japanese to get rid of British power." "These senitillations of a soul undimmed by the smoke-screen of strategy and diplomacy, were too dazzling not only to the Imperialist rulers that held sway over India but even to some of Gandhiji's own colleagues." (Pattabhi: History of the Congress.) The Working Committee however passed a resolution on July the 14th at Wardha, based on 'Quit India' demand, and on its recommendation the A. I. C. C. at Bombay passed the now famous "QUIT INDIA" resolution on August 7-8. The A. I. C. C meeting at Bombay was one of the most remarkable gatherings and was more like a Congress session in the number of public that it attracted. The atmosphere was most tense and the speeches that were delivered on the resolution showed the intensity of feeling that had been raised. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru had moved this resolution, and Sardar Patel seconded it. The text of this fateful resolution that was destined to let loose a cataclysm of mass uprising beyond precedent and expectation in the following months, throughout the country, is given below.

2. RESOLUTION ON 'QUIT INDIA'

(August 1942, Bombay, A.I.C.C.)

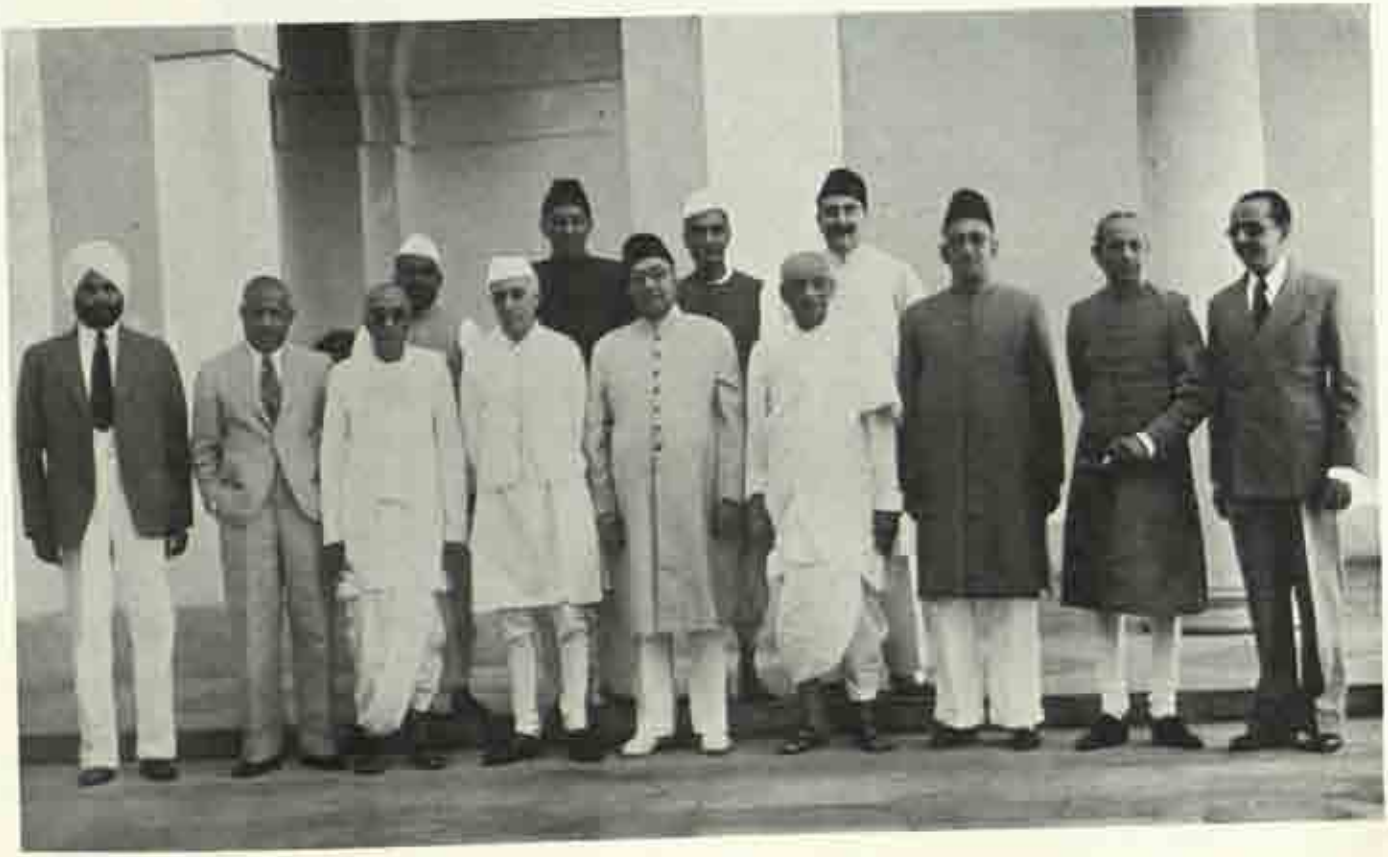
The All India Congress Committee has given the most careful consideration to the reference made to it by the Working Committee in their resolution dated July 14, 1942, and to subsequent events, including the development of the war situation, the utterances of responsible spokesmen of the British Government, and the comments and criticisms made in India and abroad. The Committee approves of and endorses that resolution and is of opinion that events subsequent to it have given it further justification, and have made it clear that the immediate ending of British rule in India is an urgent necessity, both for the sake of India and for the success of the cause of the United Nations. The continuation of that rule is degrading and enfeebling India and making her progressively less capable of defending herself and of contributing to the cause of world freedom.

The Committee has viewed with dismay the deterioration of the situation on the Russian and Chinese fronts and conveys to the Russian and Chinese people its high appreciation of their heroism in defence of their freedom. This increasing peril makes it incumbent on all those who strive for freedom and who sympathise with the victims of aggression, to examine the foundations of the policy so far pursued by the Allied Nations, which have led to repeated and disastrous failure. It is not by adhering to such aims and policies and methods that failure can be converted into success, for past experience has shown that failure is inherent in them. These policies have been based not on freedom so much as on the domination of subject and colonial countries, and the continuation of the imperialist tradition and method. The possession of empire, instead of adding to the strength of the ruling Power, has become a burden and a curse. India, the classic land of modern imperialism, has become the crux of the question, for by the freedom of India will Britain and the United Nations be judged, and the peoples of Asia and Africa be filled with hope and enthusiasm. The ending of British rule in this country is thus a vital and immediate issue on which depend the future of the war and the success of freedom and democracy. A free India will assure this success by throwing all her great resources in the struggle for freedom and against the aggression of Nazism, Fascism and Imperialism. This will not only affect materially the fortunes of the war, but will bring all subject and oppressed humanity on the side of the United Nations, and give these Nations, whose ally India would be, the moral and spiritual leadership of the world. India in bondage will continue to be the symbol of British imperialism and the taint of that imperialism will affect the fortunes of all the United Nations.

The peril of today, therefore, necessitates the independence of India and the ending of British domination. No future promises or guarantees can affect the present situation or meet that peril. They cannot produce the needed



They united two countries
Lord Pathick Lawrence with Gandhiji



The League Joins the Interim Government
They disrupted the Cabinet and the Country



Rastrapati, with Sucheta Kripalani at Meerut Session
accompanied by Shah Nawaz and Nehru



The Tricolour is hoisted. Rally of I. N. A. and other Volunteers at Meerut

psychological effect on the mind of the masses. Only the glow of freedom now can release that energy and enthusiasm of millions of people which will immediately transform the nature of the war.

The A.I.C.C. therefore repeats with all emphasis the demand for the withdrawal of the British Power from India. On the declaration of India's independence, a Provisional Government will be formed and Free India will become an ally of the United Nations sharing with them in the trials and tribulations of the joint enterprise of the struggle for freedom. The Provisional Government can only be formed by the co-operation of the principal parties and groups in the country. It will thus be a composite government, representative of all important sections of the people of India. Its primary functions must be to defend India and resist aggression with all the armed as well as the non-violent forces at its command, together with its Allied powers, to promote the well-being and progress of the workers in the fields and factories and elsewhere, to whom essentially all power and authority must belong. The Provisional Government will evolve a scheme for a Constituent Assembly which will prepare a constitution for the Government of India acceptable to all sections of the people. This constitution according to the Congress view, should be a federal one, with the largest measure of autonomy for the federating units, and with the residuary powers vesting in these units. The future relations between India and the Allied Nations will be adjusted by representatives of all these free countries conferring together for their mutual advantage and for their co-operation in the common task of resisting aggression. Freedom will enable India to resist aggression effectively with the people's united will and strength behind it.

The freedom of India must be the symbol of and prelude to the freedom of all other Asiatic nations under foreign dominations. Burma, Malaya, Indo-China, the Dutch Indies, Iran and Iraq must also attain their complete freedom. It must be clearly understood that such of these countries as are under Japanese control now must not subsequently be placed under the rule or control of any other Colonial Power.

While the A. I. C. C. must primarily be concerned with the independence and defence of India in this hour of danger, the Committee is of opinion that the future peace, security and ordered progress of the world demand a World Federation of free nations, and on no other basis can the problems of the modern world be solved. Such a World Federation would ensure the freedom of its constituent nations, the prevention of aggression and exploitation by one nation over another, the protection of national minorities, the advancement of all backward areas and peoples, and the pooling of the world's resources for the common good of all. On the establishment of such a World Federation, disarmament would be practicable in all countries, national armies, navies and air forces would no longer be necessary, and a World Federal Defence Force would keep the world peace and prevent aggression.

An independent India would gladly join such a World Federation and co-operate on an equal basis with other nations in the solution of international problems.

Such a Federation should be open to all nations who agree with its fundamental principles. In view of the war, however, the Federation must inevitably, to begin with, be confined to the United Nations. Such a step taken now will have a most powerful effect on the war, on the peoples of the Axis countries, and on the peace to come.

The Committee regretfully realises, however, that despite the tragic and overwhelming lessons of the war and the perils that overhang the world, the governments of few countries are yet prepared to take this inevitable step towards World Federation. The reactions of the British Government and the misguided criticism of the foreign press also make it clear that even the obvious demand for India's independence is resisted, though this has been made essentially to meet the present peril and to enable India to defend herself and help China and Russia in their hour of need. The Committee is anxious not to embarrass in any way the defence of China or Russia, whose freedom

is precious and must be preserved, or to jeopardise the defensive capacity of the United Nations. But the peril grows both to India and these nations, and inaction and submission to a foreign administration at this stage is not only degrading India and reducing her capacity to defend herself and resist aggression, but is no answer to that growing peril and is no service to the peoples of the United Nations. The earnest appeal of the Working Committee to Great Britain and the United Nations has so far met with no response, and the criticisms made in many foreign quarters have shown an ignorance of India's and the world's need, and sometimes even hostility to India's freedom, which is significant of a mentality of domination and racial superiority which cannot be tolerated by a proud people conscious of their strength and of the justice of their cause.

The A. I. C. C. would yet again, at this last moment, in the interest of world freedom, renew this appeal to Britian and the United Nations. But the Committee feels that it is no longer justified in holding the nation back from endeavouring to assert its will against an imperialist and authoritarian government which dominates over it and prevents it from functioning in its own interest and in the interest of humanity. The Committee resolves, therefore, to sanction for the vindication of India's inalienable right to freedom and independence, the starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale, so that the country might utilise all the non-violent strength it has gathered during the last twenty-two years of peaceful struggle. Such a struggle must inevitably be under the leadership of Gandhiji and the Committee requests him to take the lead and guide the nation in the steps to be taken.

The Committee appeals to the people of India to face the dangers and hardships that will fall to their lot with courage and endurance, and to hold together under the leadership of Gandhiji, and carry out his instructions as disciplined soldiers of Indian freedom. They must remember that non-violence is the basis of this movement. A time may come when it may not be possible to issue instructions or for instructions to reach our people, and when no Congress Committees can function. When this happens, every man and woman, who is participating in this movement must function for himself or herself within the four corners of the general instructions issued. Every Indian who desires freedom and strives for it must be his own guide urging him on along the hard road where there is no resting place and which leads along ultimately to the independence and deliverance of India.

Lastly, whilst the A. I. C. C. has stated its own view of the future governance under free India, the A. I. C. C. wishes to make it quite clear to all concerned that by embarking on mass struggle it has no intention of gaining power for the Congress. The power when it comes, will belong to the whole people of India.





CHAPTER XXVII

1942 REVOLUTION

THE mass movement of 1942 has been variously estimated by various people. The Government gave a wide publicity to its pamphlet on Congress responsibility for the movement. This was later refuted by Gandhiji and the gross misstatements and misrepresentations were exposed. It is clear from the Quit India resolution and the subsequent resolution of the A. I. C. C. that responsibility for the shape that the movement took partly was that of the Government. No doubt the movement was to do or die and was to be swift and short, but in the non-violent sense that was an article of faith with Gandhiji and the Congress.

In his letter to Sir Reginald Maxwell, Gandhiji said: "I cannot cancel the Congress rebellion which is of a purely non-violent character. I am proud of it. I have no reparation to make, for I have no consciousness of guilt".

Since 1942, the country has been engaged in such fast moving developments that an opportunity to collect and collate material about this great era has not come. But the following facts have emerged from what is known now:—

(a) That Gandhiji and the Congress envisaged a mass movement of unprecedented revolutionary character. As in earlier movements the plan was to be evolved stage by stage swiftly, till the Government stood paralysed. But it was to be a strictly non-violent movement and persuation and negotiation was to form its part.

(b) The Government had plans ready for ruthless repression and by its policy of removing all leaders and terrorisation drove the people to a frenzy and gave a new shape to the movement.

(c) As it happened the movement was a mixture of Satyagrah and sabotage. The violence against person was in a remarkably few instances, considering the provocation and Government violence.

(d) The people showed a heroic spirit of resistance and unguided and spontaneously carried on a movement with initiative, resourcefulness and fearlessness. Leadership was taken up by comparatively new blood and a battle to the might of the Empire given persistently.

(e) The true face of British imperialism was revealed once more in the brutality and spirit of vengeance and the lying propaganda against Indian nationalism in the country and abroad. This is also highlighted by the general administration of Lord Linlithgow's Government in the terms of corruption, inefficiency, and the Bengal famine.

(f) In this supreme crisis of national history many of India's friends and foes in the country and abroad were disclosed in their real character. Some Indian leaders attained a new stature.

In 1944, Gandhiji said about 1942:

"I have no shadow of doubt that passage through fire and suffering by thousands of Congressmen and Congress sympathisers has raised status of India and the strength of the people. the difference between now and August '42 is that at that time I had no knowledge of the response of the people both pro-Congress and anti-Congress would make. Now I know the kind of response they made. The heroism, suffering and self-sacrifice of those who took part in this struggle are beyond praise....."

Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru said:

"I am very proud of what happened in 1942." He took, individually, all responsibility for what had happened, even though it was absurd to say that the Congress had organised any such movement. "It was a mighty and staggering phenomenon to see a helpless people spontaneously rise in despair without any leader, organisation, preparation or arms. They bravely suffered, endured and sacrificed many things."

"In these three years, hundreds of patriots were shot down. Jail going was on such a stupendous scale that it was reduced to insignificance. But my heart is filled with pathos when I see youngmen in their teens being hanged for their passion for national independence. I pay my regard to these brave men and congratulate their clan. I do not know what myself would have done under such tense atmosphere."

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel expressed his pride at the spirit in which the people had reacted. Non-violence of Gandhiji had no doubt taken deep roots, but he pointed out that it would be like the Devil quoting scriptures, if the world outside criticised India if India used violent methods to gain her independence.

"Hold fast to the faith", the Sarder said after his release, "that every letter and the spirit of the August Resolution is Brahma's own inscriptions. Not a word could be altered from its text. Indeed the next resolution will proclaim "Quit Asia".

The broad outlines of the events of 1942 are quite well known by this time. The carefully prepared plan of the Government was put into operation and before day-break Gandhiji and other leaders were spirited away to unknown prisons. The place of imprisonment of the Working Committee members was kept a well guarded secret for a long time. The A.I.C.C. members were arrested at Bombay or in trains on the their way home. The Congress Committees everywhere were declared unlawful bodies and Congress Offices were seized and locked. Swaraj Bhawan was occupied and all provincial headquarters in all provinces were simultaneously taken possession of. Even social service organisations like khadi and Harijan centres were not spared.

At Bombay the entire police and military force was mobilised. Tear gas and lathi were used immediately and a rally of Deshsevikas was one of the targets. This was repeated all over the country in various provinces.

The spontaneous resistance began from the people equally promptly. Mrs. Asaf Ali hoisted the flag at Bombay despite police warning and there were processions and demonstrations, not only in Bombay but in far off towns and villages against the arrests of the leaders.

The slightest acts of disobedience of orders were now to be met with not merely with a lathi

charge, but with bullets. The resistance also took new shapes. Railways, telegraph and post office became the target of attack. Several post offices and Railway stations were burnt. With the increasing ruthlessness of police repression and terrorisation, the people in the towns and country-side carried more revolutionary activity. Roads and bridges were damaged and blocked and several areas became isolated for quite a long time.

At places people seized police thanas and seats of Government authority. Some buildings were burnt. There were a few cases of murder of police officers under severe provocation. But the shooting by the Government by rifle, pistol and machine guns, even by aerial straffing, caused many times more murders of the guilty as well as the innocent. The arson, looting, extortion, assault on women that was let loose was worse than that of an invading army.

A complete pall of censorship had been put on what was happening in different parts of the country. The outside world was provided with elaborate Government propaganda. Inside all news about the facts or events were strictly prohibited. The C. S. P. workers tried to make chinks in this iron curtain by circulating illicit bulletines. The only forum where anybody could express an opinion, or disclose facts of what was being enacted in various parts of the country was the Legislatures.

Two names stand out at this time of legislators who showed vigour and fearless sense of patriotism by exposing the terror that the Government had let loose. These were Mr. K. C. Neogi in the Legislative Assembly and Mr. Sri Narain Mahtha in the Council of State.

Mr. Mahtha's indictment was all the more remarkable as he was not only a title holder and landlord, but a leader of the 'War Front'—an organisation sponsored to rally pro-Government elements by the Viceroy, as a counter-blast to the Congress. It was during his tours in connection with War Front work, that Mr. Mahtha had made observations. "Troops and police were let loose on the country-side". He said, "I had reports made to me of the oppression of police and of the troops, of vandalism of wanton destruction, and loot of private property, of whole villages burnt, of extortion of money on threats of arrest, and in some cases of actual physical torture. Indians in Bihar have by now been taught that there is very little difference between shooting down a pariah dog and a pariah nigger."

Mr. Neogi, armed with information collected under very difficult circumstances made the Home Member squirm in his seat constantly and partially lifted the curtain from the terrible happenings in the country by his searching questions. He moved a resolution recommending the Government to appoint a committee to enquire into allegations of police and military exeesses. The resolution was rejected.

No complete figures of arrest and prosecutions are available, but from statements made by the Home Member in the Central Legislative Assembly the following may be taken as an official estimate for the period till the end of 1942:—

Persons arrested—60,229; persons detained under Defence Rules—18,000; persons killed by Police or Military Firing 940; persons injured on account of Police or Military Firing—1,630.

It was also stated by the Home Member that the military had to be called out in about 60 places, that the police had to resort to firing on about 538 occasions and that planes were used in five places to disperse crowds.

Another glimpse of what was being enacted was made possible and horrified the country by Prof. Bhansali's fast against atrocities at Chimoor.

Prof. Bhansali unable to get any relief from Mr. Aney, a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, had decied to undertake a fast at Mr. Aney's house. After being arrested and removed to Sevagram he walked in that condition to Chimoor, 62 miles in 56 hours: he had

not any food and water for 14 days. He was arrested and taken back in Sevagram once again. He started the journey to Chimoor again too weak to reach his destination. He was re-arrested and brought back.

Agony which was widely felt was in this way given expression by a Satyagrahi. Chimoor attracted wide-spread attention. Mrs. Ramabai Tambe (Wife of ex-Governor of the province) and several other ladies conducted an investigation and several cases of rape were established. The C. P. Government issued a communique and refused to appoint an Enquiry Committee. Action was taken to enforce ban on all news about Prof. Bhansali's fast and Chimoor affairs.

Censotship on all news and press was in fact carried to such an extreme that the Newspaper Editors' Conference had to make a demonstrative protest by suspending publications of papers all over India for one day by refusing to publish the Govt. Circulars and other Govt. information. Mr. William Philip, Personal Representative of President Roosevelt who had come to New Delhi was refused permission to see Gandhiji. Mr. Philips had stated on his arrival "My duty will be to know India as well as I can and report to the President". Britain was not prepared to trust its American allies so far as India was concerned.

Such news however, as were known created a horror and intense hatred against the Government. There were some protests from pre-eminent non-Congress public men. Mr. Allah Box, Premier of Sind renounced the honours he held from the British Government.

While doing so he wrote a letter to the Viceroy saying "that the policy of the British Government has been to continue their imperialistic hold on India, and persist in keeping her under subjection, use the political and communal differences for propaganda purposes, and crush the national forces to serve their own imperialistic aims and intentions. I feel I cannot retain the honours I hold from the British Government which in the circumstances that have arisen I cannot but regard as tokens of British Imperialism." He was asked to resign because he showed this courage of his convictions but he boldly refused. He was dismissed on the plea that he ceased to enjoy the confidence of the Government. His renouncing the titles was due to the cumulative result of the feeling that the British Government did not want to part with power, and Mr. Churchill's speech had shattered all hopes.

He said; "I have no doubt the Congress has no sympathy whatever eithe with Germany or Japan. The National demand can not be suppressed. It means more sacrifices. The more the repression the greater the bitterness, and the harm caused would be more to British interests than ours." He organised and presided at the Azad Muslim Conference held at Delhi to counteract the effects of Muslim League. Unfortunately he was murdered soon after.

Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukerjee, Minister for Finance, Bengal Government resigned his office on November 16, 1942, as a protest against the Central Government's policy with regard to the political situation in the country.

REVOLUTION IN DIFFERENT PROVINCES

The Revolution of 1942 is full of stirring episodes and heroic deeds done in various parts of the country. Two central figures that emerged and became legendary heroes in 1942, were Sri Jai Prakash Narain, the General Secretary of the Congress Socialist Party and Aruna Asaf Ali, the wife of the present Indian Ambassador to U.S.A. Aruna went underground and inspite of frantic police search carried on her tours and worked throughout the war years, till she discovered herself voluntarily. It is interesting to note that the police was equally unsuccessful in capturing Sucheta Kripalani, who also carried on the work of organising resistance, though on more orthodox Congress lines. The escape of Jai-Prakash, with five companions after scaling the jail walls at Hazaribagh, and their subsequent adventures in the jungles of Chota Nagpur and Nepal and at various places in India made

thrilling story. Many a time Jai Prakash and many of his known and unknown comrades, faced capture and the firing squad. Constantly they made new contacts and organised to give battle to the mighty military machine that war time British India had built up. In this spirit of paratroops they tried to penetrate the most dangerous War Zone, the province of the Punjab. On their arrest, Jai Prakash, Missra and some others were given torture cells of the Lahore Fort. This prison had carried a notorious reputation for its horror machine devised to break the most recalcitrant state prisoners and hallowed by the memory of Bhagat Singh and other martyrs.

It is not possible in these short pages, to deal in detail, with the part played by various provinces and districts and various men and women in the revolutionary movement in 1942 and only a brief account can be given.

The city of Bombay as in earlier movement, served as the focal point and Headquarter of the movement, specially when it went underground. The Congress Socialist Party gave such guidance and co-ordination to the movement as was possible under the circumstances. Students and Labourers played a great role in Bombay. A few mills in Bombay remained closed for about a week but there was a complete strike for over three months in all the mills in Ahmedabad. 50,000 workers sacrificed and suffered and went back to their native places while the mill owners were carrying on war business. The Students observed Hartals, took out processions and played a hide and seek game with the police in a prolonged struggle. There was a illicit radio broadcasting station and bulletin and literatures were issued to be distributed in various parts of India. The names prominent in the movement of Bombay are those of Sri Patwardhan, Ram Manohar Lohia, Usha Mehta and others.

Some of the means adopted by the people to create dead-lock were attacking and burning of police and other Government quarters, and complete stoppages of vehicular traffic by burning tram cars and buses, cutting telegraph and telephone wires, burning Railway stations and derailing trains. There were some instances of bomb throwing but there was remarkably little violence against life and there was not a single case of any private property being damaged or looted. The Government had launched the policy of repression even before the struggle started and had in fact provided incentive to it. Besides arrests there was firing, lathi charges, tear-gas attacks. There was wide spread harassing and ill-treatment of peaceful citizens.

It was in the villages that the movement assumed a mass and revolutionary character. Bihar was perhaps the most widely affected province in the whole country. This province and the eastern parts of U.P had a strategic position. The lifeline for war supplies to the eastern front passed through this area. The target of attack in Bihar was the communications, Railway stations, roads and bridges as well as police stations and courts and other Government buildings. Trouble in Bihar started with the firing on a demonstrating but peaceful procession in Bihar Secretariat compound on the 10th August. Mr. Sri Narayan Mehta in his speech later revealed how this Government action started a train of events in which the resistance of the people was matched with the repression of the Government. A terror was let loose in the villages of Bihar. The corrupt police officers aided by the military had a great time. Houses were burnt and looted and well-to-do villagers were filched on threat of looting and arrest. The movement in Bihar was not confined to one or two districts but was spread in several villages in almost every district. Every place had its own leaders. Their names are too many to be commemorated. All public workers who were yet out of jail and even those who were well known for their Gandhian loyalty to the non-violence creed had to suffer equally at the hands of the indiscriminate repression. Sri Jaglal Chowdhury, ex-minister of Bihar had his only son shot down by the military and was himself sentenced to ten years of R.I.

There were a few cases of murders of police officers and two Canadian Air Officers were mobbed and killed but the reprisal by the Government was responsible for many more murders and the

untold sufferings of guilty as well as the innocent.

After Bihar the movement was most widespread in the United Province. The district of Ballia specially distinguished itself. On 10th August the District Magistrate at Ballia under pressure of a demand from the people had to release the arrested Congress leaders of the district, and people took over the Government and the officials had to take refuge in the police lines in a panic. All communications with the outside world were cut off from the 11th. For 9 days the town and district was entirely ruled by the people. There was no crime during this period and there was all round peace. On August 19th the 'invasion' force appeared and Ballia was re-conquered. Chittoo Pandey is the hero of Ballia. The U.P. Government was headed by 'strong' man, Mr. Hallett and he wanted to teach a lesson to the rebels of Ballia and other equally rebellious places—Madhuban in Azamgar, Shaganj and other places in Gorakhpur. The police started a furious campaign of burning houses, shooting men, women and children and looting whatever they could get. A reign of terror now prevailed for a week. In the towns of U.P. at Lucknow, Meerut, Allahabad and Benares the same story had repeated itself. The police provoked peaceful procession, opened fire and killed men to terrorise them. The students including girls often faced lathi charges and many of them received bullet wound. It is estimated that over three hundred girls received injuries and others were arrested and sent to jail. There was a procession at Allahabad headed by a batch of University girls. They faced police firing three times until the police failing to break the spirit had to be withdrawn.

Like U. P. the province of C. P. also brought some unknown places on the map of India. These are Chimur, Ashti, Ramtek, Yavli and others. We have already referred to the heroic protest of Prof. Bhansali against the Government activities in the village of Chimur. Chimur is a jungle district with a population of 6000. The events in Bombay had aroused very keen though non-violent enthusiasm in the district. On 16th August a peaceful procession was greeted by lathis and bullets and the local leaders were arrested. Infuriated mob had a clash with the police and a S. I. was killed and Government buildings were burnt up and the bridges and roads were damaged and blocked. This brought the troops on the 17th. Besides wholesale arrests, beating and looting, the police and military distinguished itself by the assault on women, against which Prof. Bhansali had fasted. A similar sequence of events had repeated itself at Ashti where highly respected Congress leaders were shot down by the police and a police officer was killed in the clash that followed and Government buildings burnt. The arrest and punishment at both these places were enormous. 20 persons were sentenced to death and 26 to transportation in Chimur and 10 to death and 55 to transportation in Ashti.

Similar, though less brutal events had occured at Ramtek and Yavli, in Betul district of Mahakoshal, and in Nagpur itself. Railway stations were reduced to ashes and post offices, telegraph wires and roads were destroyed or blocked. Many well known veteran workers laid down their lives in Nagpur and other places in C. P. The Government repression distinguished itself by a new level of ferocity in this province.

In Maharashtra the district of Satara became famous in 1942 as a site of Patri-Sarkar. Satara had earned similar fame in the early Satyagraha movement of 1930-32. In 1942 when the resistance in the rural areas, as elsewhere, had been suppressed by ruthless repression, the underground workers organised a parallel Government at Satara. Such an experiment was possible in this hilly country, with various Indian States bordering on the British India districts. Earlier this district had been haunted by notorious criminal absconders largely in league with the corrupt police authority and the people in the district had been living in constant harassment and fear. The leaders of the Patri-Sarkar snatched away the initiative both from the police and the brigands and, under the leadership of some C. S. P. workers, succeeded in establishing an authority in a large

number of villages. The underground workers had to cross swords with criminal absconders and established a reign of peace and justice. They set up law courts and a police force known as Tufan Sena. The system of gramraj was carried out by the masses themselves. The Patri-Sarkar also initiated a programme of social service and village uplift work.

The experiment of course did not last long and would have been completely crushed by military force of the Government when the Working Committee was later released and the political atmosphere in the country took a different turn.

Other provinces such as Assam, Orissa, Sind and the Punjab gave a good account of themselves. The pattern of events in all these places was similar. Mass demonstration against the arrest of the leaders, police firing and arrests, incidents of sabotage followed by ruthless repression. In Assam a system of "Dictators" including Sreejukta Sarala Devi and Moulavi Md. A. S. A. Mobarak and other ladies and Muslim workers was followed, to keep the flame burning.

The conditions in the Punjab were particularly difficult and the task of the undeground workers was specially hazardous. The district of Rawalpindi, which was, by-the-way, the military Headquarters of the British Government, played a most distinguished part in the Punjab.

The 1942 movement in N. W. F. P. followed a course that is a proof of Congress contention. The Government for a long time had not arrested the beloved leader of Frontier, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, and expected to find the movement die its own death. With the guidance of Badshah Khan, the movement remained perfectly peaceful in the land of brave pathans. However it belied the expectations of the Government, and instead of dying, it gathered new force and rose to higher levels of revolutionary, though non-violent activities. It began with mass demonstrations, processions and picketing of liquor shops, till later on 4th September, 1947, the Congress and the Khudai Khidmatgars repudiated the British Raj in the province. Badshah Khan and his party started on fraternal marches in the villages and roused tremendous enthusiasm. Final phase of the movement, after a month, took the form of organised raids on Law Courts throughout the province, in a strictly non-violent manner. Khudai Khidmatgars were injured in a large number by lathi charges and were later fired upon and killed. Efforts at demoralisation having failed, the Government was now forced to resort to arrests. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan headed a force of volunteers for 'raid' or for taking possession of Mardan Law Court, as a symbol of the Government authority. He was severely beaten and had to be removed to jail in an unconscious state with his two ribs broken. Only one single case of looting of a post office was reported in this province and this was condemned unequivocally when Badshah Khan came to know of it. The casualties were all on the side of the volunteers.

In Bengal serious trouble had developed by the ruthless action of the police in Calcutta and tram cars and other traffic were completely dislocated. Roads were barricaded for a number of days. The police and the military opened fire several times in various parts of the city. A secret radio station also worked in Calcutta as in Bombay for a long time til all its workers were arrested. The movement in Calcutta was carried on mostly by the students and the enthusiasm was unprecedented even in the history of Bengal. The repression that followed was equally unprecedented. For six long months people in Calcutta resisted doggedly the mighty concentration of the police and military. Jails were filled with the arrested men and women. There were workers' strikes in military workshops. Beginning in December, 1300 workers were on strike in Calcutta. Later the number increased and ammunition factory at Cossipore had to work only part time.

Story of Midnapore

1942 movement revealed the strength and daring initiative of our common people in the

villages in a way that makes every Indian proud and happy, even those who might not like the incidents of murders and violence that marred the movement from the Congress point of view. The first place among various districts and provinces, that distinguished themselves in 1942, is that of Midnapore. In the hectic time through which we have passed since 1942, the story of Midnapore is not so widely known as it deserves to be. If there was ever a mass revolution, the heroic struggle of the peasants of Midnapore was one of them and the place of this episode in the history of Indian National struggle is unsurpassed by any event in any part of the country. In Midnapore, 'Bardoli' was re-enacted with the new revolutionary fevour that was the mark of marching time.

The events in 1942 indicated and from the earlier history of national struggle in Midnapore it became clear, that these villages were deeply influenced by the Gandhian spirit of non-violence which had infused a new strength and inspired them to stand and face the mightiest power of the British Government.

Earlier in 1930-32 movement, we remember in our jails, we were thrilled with the news from Contai and other places in Midnapore, as much as by the revolutionary episodes in Bengal about this time.

The major part of Midnapore had been the scene of agrarian distress and unrest owing to arbitrary war-time measures of the Government. The 'Denial policy' had been followed by the Government against the danger of invasion in a rather heartless manner. Boats and cycles had been seized against nominal compensation. A cess revaluation had been introduced and the war bonds were sold under high-pressure tactics. The spectre of famine, which later spread death and devastation in Bengal, was already looming large. In this desparate condition "Quit India" resolution was received by people with a sense of relief.

There were large meetings and processions. In Mahishadal a band of National volunteers in uniform led a procession of 20,000 people and held meeting in front of the police thana and in the presence of the District Magistrate to declare independence. The police did not obey the District Magistrate's order for lathi charges on the crowd.

In execution of the denial policy the Government was attempting to take away all rice stocks from this area. This was naturally resisted by the villagers and police firing and raids on several villages started on this issue.

People had been now organising plans for successful resistance and capture of Government power. The Government later in their pamphlet on the disturbances of 1942-43 had to pay a tribute to the organising capacity of people in Midnapore in the following words: "In Midnapore in Bengal, the operations of the rebels indicated considerable care and planning. Effective warning system had been devised, elementary tactical principles were observed, for instance, encirclement and flanking movements clearly on pre-arranged signals. The forces of disorder were accompanied by doctors and nursing orderlies to attend the casualties and its intelligence system was effective." Plans for simultaneous raids on police stations, courts and other Government centes were made at a secret meeting held on September 27, which was attended by prominent representatives of the Tamluk Sub-division and other adjoining areas. Next day members of the Vidyut Bahini (Lightning Corps) which was organised and run under the leadership of two prominent Congressmen, Sj. Sushil Dhara and Sj. Ajoy Mukherjee, and worked on the model of a people's militia, started the campaign. Big trees were felled to block important roads. Thirty culverts were broken and the main roads were rendered impassable. Twenty-seven miles of telegraph and telephone lines were cut and 194 telegraph posts were uprooted. Three police stations of Tamluk Sub-division were simultaneously attacked on that day and the other on the next day. The technique of the raids was simple but irresistable. Many thousands of people marched along the public roads straight towards the thana ignoring all opposition from the police, defying lathi charges

and bullets. They captured the thanas and hoisted the tri-colour National flag on the buildings. Anybody in the police force who resisted or fired upon the crowd was caught hold of and produced for public trial. In these death-defying campaigns Hindus and Muslims marched shoulder to shoulder and faced bullets with exemplary heroism.

Some of the thrilling episodes in the story of Midnapore deserve to be recorded in these pages. The following account of facts have been taken from Sri Satyen Sen Gupta's article in the A. B. Patrika :

"Five big processions in accordance with plans, approached the Sub-divisional town of Tamluk from different directions. As they were closing on the police station the sepoys under the command of a Police officer made a fierce lathi charge on the crowd to disperse them. Still the processions surged on. The Police party aided by the military thereupon resorted to firing on the processions indiscriminately. Unable to stand the rain of bullets portions of crowd dispersed. But the men who were conducting the processions marched forward. One of them was killed and several others were injured by bullets. The wounded persons were taken to Ramkrishna Seva Asram by their comrades and one of them named Sj. Ramchandra Berah was arrested by the military and carried to the police station with bleeding injuries. When Ramchandra regained his consciousness he forgot his wound and somehow managed to drag his bullet-riddled body to the outer door of the thana. His face lit up with the joy of victory. He cried aloud, as if he was calling his other comrades to follow him, 'Here am I at the thana. The thana is captured'. With these words he fell down dead.

Everybody in Midnapore will take their hats off for generations to the memory of 73-year-old peasant woman Matangini Hazra, who died a martyr's death while leading a procession through a heavy barrage of police firing in the grim days of August struggles. The procession that advanced towards the Tamluk Sub-divisional Police station from the north met with a shower of bullets from the military which compelled the men and women to retreat to some distance for the time being. A young boy named Luxmi Narayan Das, however, came forward and snatched away a gun from one of the soldiers. He was mercilessly beaten by the soldiers and when they were engaged in the act, Matangini held aloft the Congress tri-colour in her hand and led an unarmed charges through the ranks of the soldiers. The bewildered soldiers drew back and subsequently greeted her with the torrent of bullets. The first bullet pierced her hands which held the National Flag. Although badly injured she tightened her grip on the Flag and appealed to the Indian troops not to fire on Indians. She spoke to them to leave their jobs and join the national struggle for freedom. But before she could make any impression on them a bullet passed through her forehead and she fell down dead. As she lay in the dust sanctified by her blood the National Flag was still in her grip yet flying unsullied. A soldier ran to her and kicked the flag to the ground in just the usual mercenary spirit. It was a ghastly spectacle of blood-bath. A few steps behind the gory body of Matangini, lay scattered the dead bodies of Luxmi Narayan Das (13), Puri Madhab Pramanik (14), Nagendra Nath Samanta and Jiban Chandra Bera. The soldiers kept a strong guard around the dead bodies while many of those who had been injured were still crying in agony. People of the neighbouring localities who came to attend the wounded persons were not allowed to go near them. One man who lay with mortal wounds cried for water. A woman who was present in the scene rushed to a neighbouring tank, dipped the end of her sari into water and squeezed it to the lips of the man. A soldier on guard pointed the gun at her and ordered her to stop giving water. A spontaneous reply burst forth from her : 'Kill me if you like, I will not yield to your threats'.

From the south-western direction of Tamluk another procession consisting of 3000 persons entered the town across the wooden bridge. The police officer commanding a military group at the post hurled a challenge that all trespassers proceeding on the road would be shot. Several

persons including a woman came forward and offered themselves before the pointed gun. They were cordoned off and arrested. Then the procession was dispersed by a fierce lathi charge. The arrested persons were mercilessly beaten and then let off excepting seven, including the woman. They were produced before a summary trial and sentenced to 2 years R. I. each.

The procession that invaded Tamluk Police Station from the west consisted of nearly 1,000 persons. They were subject to repeated lathi charges and made to disperse.

In this manner about 20,000 people—all unarmed and non-violent—braved the hordes of Government forces. Baffled in their attempt and overpowered by torrents of bullets they withdrew, but they were not beaten. Nearly 10,000 of them spent the whole night looking for an opportunity of renewing their attack. But as the police and the military continuously poured into the town in numbers the unarmed people gradually withdrew. The relatives of those killed approached the authorities for the dead bodies but were insulted and driven away at the point of bayonets. For several days after these happenings surrounding villagers observed hartal in common with people in the town as a result of which vegetable, fish and milk markets were deserted.

On September 29 the little town of Mahishadal, situated in the interior of Tamluk sub-division, was inflamed. Numerous processions with large Congress tricolours came out from different localities within and outside the town and converged to the eastern outskirts of the police station in a gathering of 5000 people. The officer-in-charge of the P. S. assisted by the armed guards at the disposal of the local Raja intercepted the procession and opened fire killing 2 and injuring several men. The procession temporarily withdrew to a distance and soon swelled to nearly 25,000 people. The huge crowd thereupon invaded the thana. The police and armed guards of the local Raja resorted to an indiscriminate firing. Four times the people advanced in the face of heavy shower of bullets. The residence of the second officer of the Police Station was set on fire. Thirteen persons were killed and many injured by bullets.

But while these efforts did not apparently meet with complete success in Tamluk Sub-divisional Headquarters and Mahishadal, people of Sutahata and Nandigram Police Stations under the able guidance of Vidyut Bahini (Lightning Corps) stormed the two police stations in mighty mass attacks. Rifles, guns and thana office files were all seized. The buildings were set on fire along with Khasmahal office, Union Board office and many kacharies of zaminders and Rajas. The Government officers who surrendered were all well-treated. They were given railway fares and allowed to go home.

The frenzy of the people that burst forth in the shape of a mighty rebellion gave rise to a terrible boycott campaign against the British authority, in places where the movement could not achieve complete success, People boycotted all Government offices. The law courts were for the most part empty and had little work to do. The officers of the Government as well as the military had to live in the most hostile atmosphere and could get no co-operation from the people. Boatmen refused them boats, peasants and villagers did not sell articles of daily use to them and over and above all these difficulties there were the people's squads to ambush and capture them at unguarded moments. In areas that had passed under the control of 'Jutiya Sarkar' (National Government), however, a fine system of popular administration was brought into operation. The Lightning Corps was remodelled into a formidable militia and its units were kept in readiness to resist any attack either from the British or the Japanese. The efficiency of this organization stood the test of time and the people of Tamluk still remember with gratitude the great services rendered by the volunteers of Vidyut Bahini during the terrible cyclone and flood that swept the district."

The Sub-division of Contai played an equally glorious part, true to its tradition, in the non-

violent campaign of processions and hartals, picketing and boycott of Government offices, law courts and schools. The Government officers found it very hard to buy even any foodstuffs. There was a mass resignation of Chowkidars and Dafadars. Later there were raids on police stations and some of the police stations were burnt. Also some police constables were 'arrested' and kept in detention camp for ten days after which they were released. The Government authorities, of course, took due notices of these happenings. The entire Sub-division were subject to the military rule and curfew was imposed. The usual program of looting and burning of houses including schools and public buildings was followed by the Government. It has been estimated that in Contai Sub-divisional one 766 houses of different villages were burnt. Sometimes entire villages were razed to the ground. Many of the villagers left their homes. There were more than 200 cases of rape on women as recorded in the Congress office.

Similar incidents took place in Sadar Subdivision of Midnapore. Midnapore paid dearly in men and properties. Looting, arson, rape and killing was rife for long. But spirit of the people was not crushed.

The inhuman character of the Government was, however, fully revealed when Midnapore was struck by a most terrible cyclone. The protectors of Law and Order, found this as an opportunity to take their revenge on the people that had challenged the authority. The news of havoc was suppressed for over a fortnight and appeals for help were treated as criminal. It was Dr. Shyamaprasad Mookerjee who threw light on these affairs in his letter of resignation to Sir John Herbert, the unfamous Governor of Bengal. The burning of houses and looting were going on in some parts of the district even after a fortnight of the cyclone. The relief workers were put under arrest, and often the police interfered in the work of rescue of men, women and children or of giving them relief. Inspite of all this, the spirit of Midnapore remained unbroken to the last.

3. WORLD REACTION ON 1942 SITUATION

The events in India and the importance of India's part as the bastion of the war in the East brought the Indian situation prominently into the headlines in America at this time. The Congress resolution had appealed to the conscience of the world and specially to President Roosvelt, Marshall Chiang kai-Shek and M. Maisky to support India's demand for Independence. The British ambassador, in Washington, Lord Halifax with his Indian stooge Mr. Bajpai carried on anti-Congress propaganda in the U.S.A. The Congress was effectively muzzled. But the Indian cause was taken up effectively by several American publicists and thinkers at this critical time, for which India would remain grateful to these friends.

Various British and 'Indian' representatives were sent at this time to the U.S.A. to 'educate' the American opinion, on the rather obviously uncomfortable fact of British domination of India. Mr. Roosvelt, however, sent his own representative to India, who figured in the Indian situation in a significant way. The first was Col. Johnson whose name became familiar in connection with the Cripps mission. Next important figure was that of Mr. William Phillips, who created quite a sensation by his revelations, and advocacy of the Indian point of view. There were some notable American Correspondents in India in 1942, the most famous being Louis Fischer. He had lived with Gandhi and was a bearer of his message to President Roosvelt. On return to U.S.A. Mr. Louis Fischer carried a tearing and raging campaign in favour of Indian cause.

Great hopes had been aroused by the personality of Mr. Roosvelt, the author of 'Four Freedoms'. But like Woodrow Wilson in the earlier war, he passed away without realising those pledges and freedoms in the case of India. In face of the fierce opposition of their British allies, the official American attitude to the Indian stand was cautious and unhelpful. But soon after the arrest of the leaders in August 1942, the U.S.A. were deeply stirred by the speeches and writings of eminent American thinkers, authors and journalists. The spark of

Freedom, kindled by Washington was not dead in America. There was Pearl Buck, everready, to espouse the cause of India and China with her forceful pen. There was Lin-yutang, who loved India quite as much as he did China. There was Wendell Willkie, equally critical of Britain and America for their imperialistic tendencies, and pleading for one world unequivocally. There was support to the Indian cause from far sighted statesman like Henry A. Wallace, American Vice-President as well as from American Labour. The editor of Life wrote an 'open letter' to the people of England. In this letter the American view point on India was made clear.

"We Americans may have some disagreement among ourselves as to what we are fighting for, but *one thing, we are sure, we are not fighting for is to hold the British Empire together*".

There was support to the Indian cause from China. General Smuts paid a tribute to Gandhi and deprecated the propaganda sought to be made against him. Stalin had also made a general declaration, on the lines of the Atlantic Charter, formulating his policy in support of liberation of enslaved nations and restoration of their sovereign rights.

In England Mr. Brailsford and Mr. Lionel Fielden were trying for a compromise with Gandhi and the Labour Party declared their policy about India. Mr. Churchill and Mr. Amery, however, made very provocative and propagandist statements on India and the 1942 movement from time to time.

THE BENGAL FAMINE AND ITS LEGACY

Sri R. Palme Dutta

The bankruptcy of Indian agricultural economy was revealed in all its nakedness when after the entry of Japan into the war, the imports of rice from Burma were stopped. It immediately created a situation of scarcity of foodgrains and rising prices in India, which could have been met firstly, by an intensive drive to increase the production of foodgrains by relieving the burden on the tenant and by supplying him the necessary irrigation and other facilities; secondly, by control of prices and overall rationing; and lastly, by effectively checking the hoarding and blackmarketing by landlords and traders. Instead of this the imperialist Government, intent on financing the war by the exploitation of the common people, relied upon inflation, high prices, and used hoarders themselves to obtain its food supplies for the military without caring to organise equitable distribution of food for the people. The result was that though the total deficit of foodgrains in the year 1943 was only 1,400,000 tons, a minor fraction of India's needs, vast parts of country were plunged into a famine which resulted in mass deaths.

In Bengal alone, according to a survey conducted by Prof. K. P. Chattopadhyay, 3½ million people died as a result of the famine. Even the official Famine Inquiry Commission placed the total number of deaths at 1½ million.

Epidemics followed in the wake of famine, and by September 1944, 1,200,000 people in Bengal had died of various diseases (Bhowani Sen, "Rural Bengal in Ruins" p. 18).

The famine was a 'man-made' famine. The shortage in Bengal was only a shortage of six weeks' supplies and could have been made up by imports and equitable distribution. But over one-third of the population of Bengal was hit by the famine. The entire stocks had been cornered by the big zamindars and traders, and the corrupt bureaucracy rather than force stocks out of their hands helped them to shoot up prices and play havoc with the lives of millions of people. The price of rice in Calcutta which was Rs. 6 per maund in January, 1942 rose to Rs. 11 in November, 1942, Rs. 24 in February-April, 1943, Rs. 30 in May, Rs. 35 in July, Rs. 38 in August, Rs. 40 in October, 1943. The price rose to as high as Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 per maund in the mofussail districts. Rice was available all through the famine and in unlimited quantities but at Rs. 100 per maund.

The big merchants as a result made a huge surplus blackmarket profit of Rs. 1,500 million in the course of this famine (ibid., p. 1).

The first to be hit were the 75 per cent of the peasant families of Bengal, who own less than 5 acres of land and hence cannot meet their own needs of foodgrains. By May 1943, these 75 per cent had no stocks of rice left with them and "food stock was in the hands of jotedars and merchants, and of government agents and factory owners" (ibid., p.4). The famine first hit the poorest sections and then gradually its impact extended to the middle peasant. The poorer a peasant, the earlier was he forced to sell his belongings, become a destitute and meet his death. As a survey conducted by Prof. P. C. Mahalanobis and others of the Indian Statistical Institute, states :

"In fact, classification of sub-divisions by amount of paddy land owned per family before the famine was found to be roughly parallel to the degree of incidence of famine conditions." ("A Sample Survey of After-Effects of the Bengal Famine if 1943", n. iii, Sankhya, Vol. 7 part 4, 1946.)

The result of this famine was a further impoverishment of the peasantry and an increased concentration of land into the hands of the richer landlords and moneylenders.

According to this survey, nearly 1,590,000 families (about one-fourth of the number who had owned paddy land before the famine) had either sold in full or in part or mortgaged their paddy land during the course of one year of famine, from April, 1943 to April 1944. Out of these 260,000 families had totally lost their holdings and were thus reduced to the rank of landless labourers; 660,000 had sold their land in part; and 670,000 had mortgaged their paddy land.

Not more than one per cent of the Kisans who have thus lost their land, have got it back, not even by means of the legal restitution ("Rural Pengal in Ruins," p. 6).

Out of 710,000 acres of paddy land sold during the famine, only 20,000 acres had been purchased back in the villages. Roughly 420,000 acres of paddy land thus passed to outsiders, possibly non-cultivating owners residing in urban areas ("Sample Survey", p. iv).

The process of sale was not confined to land this time. The whole life of the people was disrupted. Parents were forced to throw children and babies on the roadside in the hope that somebody may pick them up and feed them. Husbands were forced to leave their wives and the whole family at the mercy of events. Women were forced to sell themselves and enter brothels. Out of the 125,000 destitutes who came to Calcutta, it is estimated that quite about 30,000 young women joined brothels to be able to just continue their breathing.

Many hundred of thousand of people have become destitutes. According to the "Sample Survey," 1,080,000 was the number of destitutes in Bengal in May 1944, out of which 480,000 persons had been rendered destitute specifically under war and famine conditions (ibed., p. v). The number of impoverished but not totally destituted comes to six million ("Rural Bengal in Ruins," p. 16).

The whole village economy was disorganised. The village artisans and craftsmen, like the fisherman, the leather worker, the blacksmith, the potter and the weaver, were the worst sufferers during the famine. They were, in fact, among the first to be hit and were reduced to mere paupers.

Even those who still survived the impact are themselves heading towards destitution. The village artisans are finding rehabilitation very difficult. All articles of their need—yarn, iron, net, leather, etc., have gone into the blackmarket. The peasants have no cattle to plough the land, about 700,000 or 8·5 per cent of the families of rural Pengal having lost all the cattle they had before the famine. During this one year, 20 per cent of the bullocks either perished or passed into the hands of the non-tillers.

The proportion of families in debt has immensely increased. The following data collected by the Kisan Samiti workers shows the increase in indebtedness of the families still living in the worst of the famine-affected areas :

	Percentage of families in debt	
	1943	1944
Kisan families	43	66
Various craftsmen	27	56
Miscellaneous	17	46

(Ibid., p. 12.)

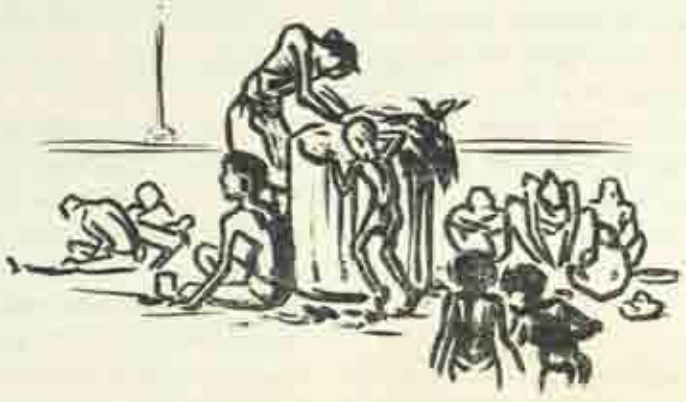
Vast masses of peasants to-day have no land, no seed, no cattle, no cash to buy their requirements and "the propertied peasant is today dependent upon the prosperous peasant in the village or upon the jotedar for his land, his cattle, for oil-cake, and even for seed. He has to sell himself at any terms to secure land, cattle and seed, or he would be reduced to a day labourer" (Ibid., p. 10).

What happened in Bengal was a most accentuated form of the crisis overtaking the entire country. Nowhere did the mass of the peasantry gain from high wartime prices. Only a thin stratum of the middle peasants were able to wipe off part of their debts ; the masses sank deeper and deeper into debt and thus lost their lands. Recently an enquiry was conducted by the Madras Government under Dr. B. V. Naidu into the rural debt during the war. The various statistics given by the enquiry do not give a correct picture at all; they are very m biassed, tremendous weightage during sampling having been given in favour of the landlords. But even this enquiry could not conceal the real trend, namely, that the debt of the petty landholders, tenants and agricultural labourers has immensely increased as a result of the war.

A process of expropriation of cultivators has been going on all through the war years a terrible pace, leading India into a state of chronic scarcity, stravation and famine. In 1946, within three years of the great famine, India is once again faced with a situation when the total deficit of foodgrains is estimated to be 6 million tons and lives of one-fourth of the population are threatened with extinction.[1]

(The latest position as revealed by the Government as is follows :—

"India indulged in international trade for centuries, but she never imported foodgrains. Now we don't get anything else and continue to beg for more. From January to June our imports amounted to 11,57,000 tons. Last year we imported 2¼ million tons. India has already paid 77 crores of rupees. In order to stabilise food prices within the country the Government has had to subsidise by Rs. 20½ crores on an import of Rs. 100 crores. The spiral started in 1943 when we imported 3,28,686 tons. In 1944 it went up to 6,53,000 tons. In 1945 it was 8,56,726 tons".)



(1) India To-day — R. Palme Dutt.



CHAPTER XXVIII

GANDHIAN MARCH TO PORTALS OF FREEDOM

Sir S. Radhakrishnan

I

THERE are certain pages in the histories of nations which are referred to by later generations with pride and reverence. Our age is one such which will be remembered as the era of the resurrection of our nation, when our country passed from a state of subjection to a foreign power to one of freedom. This great transition is consummated by the consecrated will of the people and their determined non-violent resistance to the greatest imperialist power. This emergence of our nation is achieved without a long drawn out armed conflict with its aftermath of hatred, bitterness and decline in moral standards. We owe this in the main to Mahatma Gandhi who has vitalised the country, awakened its will, roused its energies and inspired its political thinking with a new ethical passion.

In a recent book on "The Yogi and the Commissar" Arthur Koestler observes that the future of European civilization depends on the refashioning of the human mind. "Neither the saint nor the revolutionary can save us, only the synthesis of the two." We have such a synthesis in Gandhi, who is at once a saint and a revolutionary. His saintliness has little in common with sectarian orthodoxy. For him the Ultimate Spirit is greater than the scriptures, the One Supreme whom all religions adore. The sacred fire is the same in its essence wherever it may be burning. Historical accidents account for the varied expressions we employ to represent the same meaning. Ghandhi's faith in God makes him an incorrigible optimist about the future of man. From his faith flow his devotion to truth and love, his singleness of purpose, his soul of honour, attributes that have endeared him to us all. His call to us is to deepen our spirits and enlarge the scope of our affections. The nobler a soul is, it is said, the more objects of compassion it has. The greatest souls look upon the whole world as their family, *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*.

Though Gandhi has contributed a great deal to the recovery of our nation, to the revelation of its mental and moral resources so long repressed by enslavement, though he has led, guided and controlled for over a generation our liberation movement which has to its credit many sacred memories and sacrificial efforts, our national revival is not the chief or the highest part of his great work. When the strife of these days is

forgotten. Gandhi will stand out in history as the great prophet of truth and love in the settlement of national and international disputes. In clear and confident tones he tells us that this world of blood of tears is not what the world should be. We must build a world of peace and we cannot do so unless we secure for it a truly moral foundation. We may hold different metaphysical views, adopt different modes of worship and there are millions to-day who do not desire or place their faith in any God at all. But every one of us will feel highly offended if he is pronounced destitute of any moral sense, if he is said to be untruthful or unloving. All religions and systems of morality are agreed that respect for life, respect for intangible possessions, good name and honour, constitute morality and justice. Do not unto others what you would not like to be done to you. *Atmanah pratikulani paresam na samacaret.* Even primitive savages accept this principle. Only for them its appreciation is limited to their own tribe and race and those outside are not regarded as human beings. As our horizon expands, as our moral sense deepens, we feel that these moral precepts are valid for all human beings. The great German philosopher Kant, who was very sensitive to right and wrong, declared, "No evil shocks the mind like injustice: all other evil that we suffer is as nothing compared therewith". He continues, "If justice should perish, it would no longer be worth living for human beings to live on earth". Fear of our own safety or the peril of our country should not prevent us from protesting against injustice and resisting wrongs. Neutrality between right and wrong is a sign of moral perversity.

This aching world longs to live but it does not know how. Our projects for reshaping life which began in hope have ended in failure. Our sorrows and sufferings are being repeated under other forms. All this is not due to the defects of the political machinery of the League of Nations or the United Nations Organization but to the failings of men who operate them. The political and economic factors, geography, and geology, scientific discovery and industrial development are no doubt important but more important than all these is the human element which is a complex of wisdom judgment, disinterestedness, a sense of fairplay, self-mastery or their opposites of greed, ambition, vanity, pride and jealousy. The real problem is the human one. History is made more by the emotions of men than by the forces of economics. Whether the world makes for achievement or frustration depends on the nature of the human material. The re-education of man, the discipline of his will and intelligence which will cure his weaknesses to which he is inclined and strengthen the virtues which he requires is what we need. We should endow human beings with a sense of right which will burn up the grosser elements of our nature in its consuming flame.

Today the world is like a ship with no captain, heading for the rocks. It is swept by passion and folly. We do not know whether it is passing through birth pangs or death throes. If we adopt the path of greed, hatred and self-interest, we will become sometimes less than human. If we take the other path of fortitude, unselfish service and sacrifice, we will reach heights of splendour in body, mind and spirit of which we can hardly dream. Irreligion is our malady and religion as an adventure of spirit, as radical transformation of human nature is the cure for it.

Such a religion will be revolutionary in character requiring us to embrace by an act of faith a vision of humanity based on justice, racial and national. Enslavement of one people by another, whatever may be the reason, is an act of injustice. Those who suffer from such injustice wish to get rid of it by armed resistance. It is Gandhi's supreme contribution that he substitutes for this method of force the method of love.

It is said that non-violence is the dream of the wise while violence is the history of man. It is true that wars are obvious and dramatic and their results in changing the course of history are evident and striking. But there is a struggle which goes on without arms and violence in the minds of men. The consequences of this deeper struggle are not recorded in the statistics of the killed and the injured. It is the struggle

for human decency, for the avoidance of physical strife which restricts human life, for a world without wars and famines, for raising humanity to a higher plane. Gandhi is the most effective fighter in this great struggle. His message is not a matter for academic debate by intellectual highbrows. It is the cry of exasperated mankind which is at the cross roads. Which shall prevail —the law of the jungle or the law of love? Every child that is born into the world offers by its advent the assurance that love is the basis of life. The common people are simple and kind. They love their neighbours and go out of their way to help them. It is wrong to assume that human nature is warlike and it is difficult to change it. Violence is not born in men but is built into them. Human nature is plastic and is capable of improvement. Cannibalism and human sacrifices are abolished. The diseased and the insane are not cut off. We are not happy about the execution of murders. We look forward to a time when criminals and lunatics will be treated as objects of remedial care.

It is argued that it will not be possible for one nation to adopt non-violence while others are heavily armed. Such a view will make all progress impossible. The human race did not get on its hind legs as one man. However, general the consciousness that the posture is possible may have been, someone had to make a start with the gesture. Even now someone has to express consciously the half-realised resentment of the ordinary human being to the organization of war. Gandhi felt that he could make a start with the Indian people who, in his opinion, had an innate love of truth and hatred of force. If India by the practice of non-resistance overthrows foreign rule, she will help to build a new humanity out of the ruins of a war-weary and worn-out world.

Gandhi believes that non-violence is the most effective remedy in all conditions. In this battle he who wins gains freedom, he who falls is already free. "To experiment with Ahimsa in face of a murderer is to seek self-destruction. But this is the real test of Ahimsa. He who gets himself killed out of sheer helplessness, however, can in no wise be said to have passed the test. He, who when being killed bears no anger against his murderer, and even asks God to forgive him, is truly non-violent. In a world cursed by obstinate prejudice, held together by unfading memories of ancient feuds, who can measure the value of this matchless weapon of reconciling love.

II

"Physician, heal thyself," is the challenge of the successful nations to the people of India. Gandhi has accepted this challenge and has spent his life in the task of the healing of the nation. He has known the physical poverty, intellectual inertia and spiritual decadence of his people. He has seen in his life thousands of ragged skeletons of human beings crawling to the wayside ditches to die. He has seen workers huddled together in tenaments leading a poor careworn existence on a petty wage condemned to insecurity and poverty never far removed from destitution. He has seen middle classes grow up, Eurasian in mentality, insensitive to ideals. He has felt the moral injury inflicted by political subjection. Patiently he has addressed himself to the task of the regeneration of his people. He has roused their sense of self-respect, goaded them to strive for better conditions and look at their masters, white or brown, with fearlessness. None are so fitted to break the chains as those who wear them. He symbolizes the struggle of the common man and has identified himself with the starving millions by forgoing privileges which others cannot share. His loin cloth, his spinning wheel, his third class travel are symbolic of his community with the poorest of the country.

Freedom is not merely the improvement of physical conditions or the achievement of political independence. It is advance into a new life when all things undergo transformation and all forms of human oppressions cease. Gandhi seeks to emancipate us from the network of social restrictions imposed on use by centuries of tradition. He enlarged the progress of the Congress and made it include the removal of the curse of untouchability, the evil of drink, the pride of caste and the

prejudice of religion. The caste and the outcaste, the rich and the poor, the Muslim and the Hindu, the Sikh and the Christian, are all brethren in his integrated vision of the new India which is in the making. Every period of transition is one of friction, resistance, conflict, distress of mind, a cruel clash of rival loyalties. The old does not yield without protest, the new is not accepted without resistance. In our generation there has been a considerable dislocation of society, decay of conventions and beliefs and breakdown of authority. Our society is heaving like some huge animal in pain. We feel that there has been no age so disillusioned, so eclectic, so unbelieving as ours. In such a period when all things are on the move, Gandhi asks us to hold fast to the great loyalties of spirit, to virtue and to truth.

In his anxiety to get rid of British rule he does not resort to falsehood or cunning, deceit or violence. He would rather postpone the achievement of Indian freedom than resort to wrong means. When he returned from Second Round Table Conference, he said, "I admit that I have come back empty handed, but I am thankful that I have not lowered or in any way compromised the honour of the flag that we entrusted to me. It has been my constant prayer that I may not in an unguarded moment of weakness betray myself into act or word that may be unbecoming to the dignity of my country or the trust which my countrymen have reposed in me. Thanks to his leadership, the struggle for Indian freedom has been unmixed with any racial animosity. There lurks no ill will for the British in Indian hearts. If we compare the way in which anti-British feeling expressed itself in Ireland or is expressing itself in Palestine today we will see how the Indian movement for independence has been a clean one. What times are exceptional and tempers frayed, there is a temptation to commit excesses but Gandhi does not tolerate them. When the Bombay naval disturbances occured he scolded those who started them. He is fully aware of the extent of corruption in high places, of the failure of services, of masking of secular ambition by the profession of religious purpose, of the irritation of the people and yet he warns us not to lose grip over fundamental principles. He advises us to view the affairs of our disordered and long suffering country in the light of great ideals.

That we are establishing freedom without any bloodshed and anarchy is a great triumph for Gandhi and his principle of non-violence. He certainly does not ask us to acquiesce in wrong or submit meekly to injustice. He advised us again and again to resist injustice as emodied in British rule. Suffering there has been but it has been the suffering of our own people. Thousands lost their lives. More thousands lost their property and still more suffered in prison. The British Government's realisation that it is impossible to carry on the old line is due to the organized resistance of the Indian people to British rule. The war of course gave great impetus to the liberation movements. Public opinion of the world is insistent that imperialism should be liquidated. The British Government's acceptance of independence to India is a response to the the necessities of the case.

There are many among the younger member of the country who viewed the British Government's proposals with profound misgivings. They saw in it under cover of a generous gesture a manouvere more complicated but similar in trend to the old policy of divide and rule. But Gandhi advised us not to lose faith in ourselves or even in the British. To suspect motives is a species of weakness. When division of country was forced on us, Gandhi opposed it passionately to the last moment and when this division bore its gory fruit and fierce and brutal fratericidal war raged and sanity and goodwill were totally lost, Gandhi alone remained steadfast in his all embracing compassion, in his faith in human goodness and his endeavour to bring the people back to sanity and goodwill. Full freedom for the country could not be achieved by the transfer of political power. The achievement of political freedom was a step but only a step towards realisation of the ideals which the Congress set to itesell when established in 1885. Gandhi is the embodied voice of sixty years of our struggle for freedom, and the unity of our people. Today we must think of those great leaders of

the past, who in their own way and according to their own lights worked for the goal which we are approaching. If their ideals do not appeal to us today, if our present programmes seem to a section of our impatient youth to be somewhat inadequate, let us remember that politics is the art of the possible. It occupies a middle or mediating position between the spirit and the life, between the actual and the ideal, between the desirable and the necessary. It will embrace much that is high or merely expedient, much that is concession to facts and human weakness. But whatever measures we may adopt, however much we may yield to hard facts, we should never renounce the ideal, never deny the moral side of human nature.

When we pass from the ease and security of servitude to the risk and adventure of freedom, we have to face dangers and differences. The tragic chain of events starting from August 16th in Calcutta with all their frightfulness and brutality, in Noakhali, Bihar, and other places, reaching culmination in unabashed mass terrorisation and massacres in the Punjab and the N. W. F. Provinces are unfortunately the result of the doctrine of hatred preached and provoked openly by some of our leaders.

The Indian National Congress adopted direct action under the names of Non-cooperation, civil disobedience and Satyagraha but it was generally controlled by the principle of non-violence. In the murder, arson and loot that followed the League programme of direct action which did not exclude violence from its conception, the human bonds were untied and the beast in man loosened. Those who talk incessently of violence, of bloodshed, of civil war, cannot escape responsibility for the excesses of the mobs and violent attacks on person and property. If common people forget their humanity and behave towards one another like brutes, we are responsible for misleading them. Through press and wireless we demoralise men, debauch their minds, deny outrageous rumours in order to spread them further, invent messages and improve on them. Society is held together by the decency, loyalty and good faith of the common man. When we appeal to the darker side of human nature, to its selfishness and cupidity, to communal and racial prejudice, we tend to break up society. Men are not meant for uniforms, material or spiritual.

Terrorism has become a regular instrument of politics in these months after the war. It is a new and disturbing force in the politics of the world. It emerged from the practices natural to total war where the justice of the means was derived from the righteousness of the end. A deliberate cult of toughness has spread and we are feeling ashamed of pity as of a crime. Gangster methods are used as a form of pressure on the Government by those who believe that the march of events is too slow and needs a kick. This new uprush of barbarism will not be eradicated by force. History demonstrates that murders breed murders and we can cut across the vicious cricle only by getting behind and trying to understand. That the end justifies the means, that morality may be subordinated to the interest of the groups, race or nation is an anti-social doctrine. If it is accepted, Governments will become instruments of social torture. Though Gandhi is deeply disturbed by the rising wave of violence he feels that the spirit of violence will be killed and will not continue as it is contrary to the spirit of this land. These terrible happenings in the country demonstrate not only that there are barbarians in all groups but also that there are finer elements capable of quiet charity and elemental goodness. These reserves of moral power should be used to save our society from decline.

The great Buddha said that the republic of the Lichchavis would prosper so long as the members of their assembly met frequently, showed reverence to age, experience and ability, transacted business in concord and harmony and did not develop selfish parties engaged in perpetual wrangling for their narrow and selfish ends. If we are to adopt his advice we must produce a framework which will reduce internal conflict and foster the virtues which make for the values of civilization, humility, understanding and justice. We

should refuse to believe that the world can be saved only by desperate men. We must establish the dignity of man in the breasts of our fellowmen. We must hold ourselves personally responsible for every savage act that is done. Democracy means a faith that we are equals in the eyes of God, that we are all equally important to ourselves, that we have an equal right to realize ourselves, provided that in so doing we do not interfere with similar realization on the part of others. Liberty is not merely a matter of political independence, constitutional democracy or freedom of thought. No man can have liberty if he is confined and oppressed by ignorance, by poverty, by excessive hours of labour or insecurity of livelihood. Those who suffered and died in the cause of Indian freedom did not do so to defeat the rising tide of democratic forces. We have now a government of our leaders and it rests with it to make the people feel that they have at last got their own government. We have till now shown great strength in offering resistance. We have now to show that we have enough strength and discipline for constructive leadership. Successful self-government requires men who have governed their own selves, their ingrained selfishness and communal pride. The new government has a great responsibility. It will have to destroy the mutual distrust of the communities and foster the faith that every Indian whatever be his race or community can live without fear and will have an equal opportunity in a free India. Men's actions are ruled by passions and if our country is not to become a madhouse, it is the task of statesmanship to make the nobler passions prevail.

The people—whether they are Hindus or Muslims, Princes or peasants—belong to this one country. Earth and Heaven have combined to make them belong to one another. If they try to disown it, their gait, their cast of countenance, their modes of thought, their ways of behaviour, they will all betray them. It is not possible for us to think that we belong to different nationalities. Our whole ancestry is there. Take the problems from which we suffer: our hunger, our poverty, our disease, our malnutrition—these are common to all. Take the psychological evils from which we suffer—the loss of human dignity, the slavery of the mind, the stunting of sensibility and the shame of subjection—these are common to all: Hindus or Muslims, Princes or peasants.

It is essential for any constitution which is drawn up to make all the citizens realise that their basic privileges—educational, social and economic—are afforded to them; that there will be cultural autonomy, that nobody will be suppressed; that it will be a constitution which will be democratic in the true sense of the term, where, from political freedom we will march on to economic freedom and equity. Every individual should feel that he is proud to belong to this great land.

Apart from all these, a nation does not depend on identity of race, or sentiment, or on ancestral memories, but it depends on a persistent and continuous way of life that has come down to us. Such a way of life belongs to the very soil of this land. It is there indigenous to this country as much as the waters of the Ganges or the snows of the Himalayas. From the very roots of our civilization down in the Indus Valley to the present day, the same great culture is represented among Hindus and Muslims, we have stood for the ideal of comprehension and charity all these centuries.

I remember how Anatole France went up to the Musee Guimet on the first of May 1890 in Paris and there in the silence and simplicity of the gods of Asia reflected on the aim of existence, on the meaning of life, on the values which peoples and Governments are in search of. Then his eyes fell on the statue of the Buddha. France felt like kneeling down and praying to him as to a God, the Buddha, eternally young, clad in ascetic robes, seated on the lotus of purity with his two fingers upraised admonishing all humanity to develop comprehension, and charity, wisdom and love, prana and karuna. If you have understanding, if you have compassion, you will be able to overcome the problems of this world. Asoka, his great disciple, when he found his Empire inhabited by men of all races and religions said:

"Samavaya eva sadhuh"

"Concord alone is the supreme good"

India is a symphony where there are, as in an orchestra, different instruments, each with its particular sonority, each with its special sound, all combining to interpret one particular score. It is this kind of combination that this country has stood for. It never adopted inquisitorial methods. It never asked the Parsis or the Jews or the Christians or the Muslims who came and took shelter there to change their creeds or become absorbed in what might be called a uniform Hindu humanity. It never did this. "Live and let live"—that has been the spirit of this country. If we are true to that spirit, if that ideal which has dominated our cultural landscape for five or six thousand years and is till operating, I have no doubt that the crisis by which we are faced today will be overcome as many other crises in our previous history have been overcome. Suicide is the greatest sin. To murder yourself, to betray yourself, to barter away your spiritual wealth for a mess of pottage, to try to preserve your body at the expense of your spirit—that is the greatest sin. If we, therefore, stand out for the great ideal for which this country has stood, the ideal which has survived the assaults of invaders, the ideal for which, unswervingly and even alone, Gandhi stands even today amidst a contagion of madness and brutality, if we are able to do it, the flame which has sustained us in overcoming foreign rule, will fire our efforts to build a united and free India.

To what destinies our nation is marching we do not know. But this at least we know that those destinies have been perceptibly affected by the life and work of this great soul, this central figure of our age who has disclosed to an unheeding world the beauty of truth and the power of love. He belongs to the type that redeems the human race. His life which has been a testimony of devotion to freedom, of allegiance to faith, of the undying glory of duty fulfilled, of sacrifice gladly accepted for all human ideals, will continue to inspire countless generations for nobler living.



GOD IS THEIR BREAD

(Gandhiji)

I recognise no God except the God that is to be found in the hearts of the dumb millions. They do not recognise His presence ; I do. And I worship the God that is Truth or Truth which is God, through the service of these millions.

I dare not take before them the message of God. I may as well place before the dog over there the message of God as before these hungry millions who have no lustre in their eyes and whose only God is their bread. I can take before them a message of God only by talking the message of sacred work before them. It is good enough to talk of God whilst we are sitting here after a nice breakfast and looking forward to a nicer luncheon, but how am I to talk of God to the millions who have to go without two meals a day ? To them God can only appear as bread and butter. Well, the peasants of India were getting their bread from their soil. I offered them the spinning wheel in order that they may get butter and if I appear today.....in my loin-cloth it is because I come as the sole representative of these half-starved, half-naked dumb millions.

I am able to restrain myself from committing suicide by starvation because I have faith in India's awakening and her ability to put herself on the way to freedom from this desolating pauperism. Without faith in such a possibility I should cease to take interest in living.

For the poor the economic is the spiritual. You can not make any other appeal to those starving millions. It will fall flat on them. But you take food to them and they will regard you as their God. They are incapable of any other thought.

.....Talk to them of modern progress. Insult them by taking the name of God before them in vain. They will call you and me fiends if we talk about God to them. They know, if they know God at all, a God of terror, vengeance, a pitiless tyrant.

BOOK VII.

FREEDOM'S OTHER FRONTS



CHAPTER XXIX

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

The Indian Struggle for Independence has been mainly a non-violent revolution. As such it is a unique phenomenon of World history. Even though not completely successful this achievement is a land mark in human civilisation more significant than a great scientific discovery or a new social experiment, like the application of atomic energy for instance or socialism or the U. N. O.

But partly the Indian battle has been fought on other than non-violent fronts. It would be unrealistic to belittle the contribution of other ideologies and parties.

Before 1920, the Congress was a liberal body and the only way for the more sensitive and idealistic youth seemed to be the way shown by such leaders as Savarkar, Aurovindo, as also by Tilak and Lajpatrai. These earlier revolutionaries played a part that cannot be measured by their meagre numbers. They kindled and kept burning a flame that was later to make a revolutionary mass movement possible, even on non-violent lines.

After Gandhiji's coming the Congress movement presented scope and opportunity for equal sacrifice and daring in revolutionary activity. Also it gave a chance for coming in touch with the masses. By this time the revolutionary, the world over, had become more conscious of the necessity of a mass revolution as against individual or small group activity. So the Congress absorbed most of the actual and potential revolutionaries. But a section continued on a separate course. This section contained some of the most active and self-less young men and women of our country.

The revolutionary movement began with the so called Mutiny or even earlier. In fact it drew its inspiration from earlier rebels to foreign-invader rule, from Shivaji, Pratap, Govind Singh ; as also from the revolutionary movements outside India. In fact these two influences, the revivalist and that of modern history, have been the inspiration of our revolutionary movement throughout, whether violent or non-violent.

Whatever the contribution of violence and non-violence in the attainment of our objective as we wanted it and as it ultimately came, there is no doubt that the revolutionary slogans moved the

country as much as the Congress slogans. We have three such slogans that mark three periods. Bande Mataram was the expression of a mystic worship of the motherland. Inqilab Zindabad, given by Bhagat Singh, had a consciousness of class war and mass revolution along with freedom from the foreign yoke. Then came Jai Hind. It sounded like a trumpet call of victory of India that belonged to all communities and classes.

Of the gratitude of the country, including all sections and schools of thought, to these men and women there is no doubt. Harassed and hunted, they followed their lonely trail. Many spent a lifetime in jails and the Andamans—so that we may enjoy freedom and peace. Many faced death so that we may live. In their memory the following story is told.

Manmathanath Gupta, the writer of this Chapter is an ex-Kakori convict. He has spent twenty years—i.e., more than half of his life in British prisons in connection with the revolutionary movement. His book "Bharat men Sashastra Krantl Cheshta ka Romanchkari Itihas" is the best known book on the history of the revolutionary movement, and remained under ban for seven years.

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT IN INDIA

Shri Manmathanath Gupta

The Word Revolutionary Defined

EVERY progressive movement, whether violent or non-violent, is revolutionary in essence. But in the present context, by the word revolutionary is meant a person who having eschewed evolutionary methods takes to revolutionary methods, dubbed as violent by the rather orthodox. With this not very precise definition, I shall proceed to recount the history of the revolutionary movement in India in short. I am deliberately avoiding a meticulous definition, because the revolutionaries whose story I propose to relate in the following pages, covered the whole gamut beginning from raw terrorists to almost full-fledged Marxists.

Revolutionary Movement an Organic part of the National Movement

There has been a tendency among the writers of the history of the Indian National movement to ignore the revolutionary movement completely. But this short account would prove that the revolutionary movement was an organic part of the wider national movement. Although the first revolutionary of the rather modern type lived and worked before the Indian National Congress was born, the revolutionary movement cannot be separated from the wider stream of the nationalist upsurge. It greatly influenced the national movement, impregnated it with its own virility and cataclysmic speed, spurred it on to ever new heights, imparted to it its own restless soul, but that is not all. In its own turn it took colour and design from it, and tried to keep pace with it, at least in its outbursts of a mass nature.

Wahabis in the Forefront

Peculiarly enough the credit of being the pioneer revolutionary in India goes to some Muslims. Very few people know about this fact. In 1871 the Wahabi leader Amir Khan was exiled for life under Regulation III of 1818. This stirred the Wahbis. They submitted a petition in the Calcutta High Court praying that the exile order on Amir Khan might be cancelled, and that he might be tried in open court. The Wahabi movement, although religious in appearance, sought to oust the British from India.

The Wahabis got the proceedings of the case printed in the form of a booklet, and got it widely distributed throughout the length and breadth of India. Even Bepin Chandra Paul, the great leader

of Bengal, wrote later on in his reminiscences that his imagination was very much fired by this booklet.

After a short time, to be exact, on the 20th September, 1871, Mr. Norman, the judge in whose court the case of Amir Khan was heard, was stabbed dead by one Abdulla, a Wahabi. Mr. Norman was stabbed when he was mounting the steps of the town hall.

This murder infuriated the Europeans so much that, although Abdulla was ordered to be hanged, and he was hanged, the Europeans would not let him have a decent Muslim burial. Abdulla's body was dragged from the gibbet and burnt like that of a Hindu. Even after death he was not spared dishonour.

On the 8th of February 1872, Lord Mayo, while visiting the Andaman prisons, was stabbed by one Sher Ali. Sher Ali was a Wahabi, and had been sentenced to transportation for life for his activities as a Wahabi.

After this the Wahabi movement was suppressed ruthlessly, so much so that even in very good histories written by nationalists, there is no mention of either the Wahabies or Abdulla or Sher Ali. But there is no doubt about it that after 1857 the credit of being the first revolutionaries of India goes to these obscure but brave men, about whose history and ideology we know next to nothing.

Spate of Fashionable Secret Societies

The liberation movement in Italy fired the imagination of Indian youths, and there was a spate of secret societies in Bengal. The great Reformer Rajnarain Basu fathered one such society. Even the great poet Tagore became the member of one such society. But these secret societies being confined to the aristocracy only proved to be more fashionable than productive of any real visual results. Of course they contributed greatly to the renaissance of India in every sphere. These societies acted as ferment to many progressive tendencies in art, literature, culture but judged from political overt acts of a spectacular nature their contribution was nil. So we shall ignore them in this short account, and proceed to Maharashtra where the next outburst manifested itself.

The Lokamanya and Ganapati and the Shivaji Festival

Lokamanya Tilak was the leader and maker of modern Maharashtra. Although by tendency an erudite scholar, he was the embodiment of the philosopy of action which he so fondly preached in his writings. He was the editor of a paper called the Keshari which for a generation remained the torch bearer of nationalism in that part of the country. The Lokamanya was also the sponsor of the Ganapati and the Shivaji festivals. At first he originated the Ganapati festival. The object of reviving the same was to preach nationalism under the garb of religion. After the success of this festival, he took up the Shivaji festival, a festival avowedly political. Both these festivals were taken up by the youths of Maharashtra in great earnest, and through their intermediary a rather powerful mass movement arose.

Society for the Removal of Obstacles to the Hindu Religion

Fired by the prevalent aggressively nationalistic ideas Damodar and Balakrishna Chapekars formed a society for physical and military training which they named the "Society for the removal of obstacles to the Hindu religion". The name of the society smacks of Hindu Mahasabha as we now understand it, but there was nothing of this element in the minds of these youths. For them the British ruler was the enemy number one of Hindu religion as they conceived it. One Mr. Rand had made himself very unpopular by his autocratic and high-handed handling of the Plague in Poona.

Lokamanya's Plea for Revolutionary Politics

This oppression of the citizens of Poona gradually enraged the people, and on the occasion

of the Shivaji festival, which fell on the 12th of June bitter speeches were made.

Lokamanya Tilak who presided on that occasion said, "Did Shivaji commit sin in killing Afzal Khan? The answer to this question can be found in Mahabharata itself. Sri Krishna's advice in the Gita is to kill even our own teachers and kinsmen. No blame attaches to any person if he is doing deeds without being actuated by a desire to reap the fruits of his deeds. Sri Shivaji did nothing to fill the void of his stomach. With benevolent intentions he murdered Afzal Khan for the good of others. If thieves enter our house and we have not sufficient strength to drive them out, we should without hesitation shut them up, and burn them alive. God has not conferred upon the foreigners the grant inscribed in a copper plate of the kingdom of Hindusthan. Shivaji strove to drive them away from the land of his birth. He did not thereby commit the sin of coveting what belonged to others. Do not circumscribe your vision like a frog in a well. Get out of the Penal code, and enter the extremely high atmosphere of the Bhagwat Gita and consider the actions of great men."

Mr. Rand Killed

The 22nd of June 1897 was being celebrated as the 60th coronation day of Queen Victoria. Every nook and corner of the empire was ringing with merriments. There was general illumination and display of fireworks in the city of Poona. Two Government officials Mr. Rand, the plague commissioner and one Lieut. Ayerst were returning home from some nocturnal party. They were shot at and were killed. The Chopekar brothers had shot Mr. Rand. Damodar Chopekar was caught red handed, was tried and convicted of the double murder.

How the revolutionary movement and the wider national movement interpenetrated each other would become apparent from the fact that the great Lokamanya was convicted on the trail of the Rand murder. The authorities held him responsible for the abetment of the murder. Besides the Kesari, some other papers were also victimised.

Shyamji Krishnavarma

Two well known citizens of Poona, belonging to the Natu family were deported under Regulation XXV of 1827 in connection with the incidents in Poona. Shortly after these deportations Shyamji Krishnavarma, a Kathiawari millionaire went away to London of his own accord to escape possible police atrocities. For sometime he just hibernated, but when after some years, he became sure that the police was no longer after him he started the India Home Rule Society in London. The aim of the society was to initiate Indian students who had gone to England for studies into the nationalist cult. A monthly paper called the Indian Sociologist was published as the organ of the society. In order to attract students Shyamji announced 'that he proposed to establish six lectureships of Rs. 1,000 each for enabling authors, journalists and qualified engineers to visit Europe, America and other parts of the world so as to equip themselves efficiently for the work of spreading among the people of India a knowledge of freedom and national unity.' It should be noted here that Shyamji offered these scholarships from his own purse. He not only spent lavishly from his own pocket, but induced other Indian millionaires to spend money for political ends. It was at Shyamji's instance that Mr. S. R. Rana, an Indian resident in Paris offered three travelling scholarships of Rs. 2,000/- each to be called after Rana Pratap of Chittore, Shivaji and some distinguished Muslim ruler.

V. D. Savarkar in London

Shyamji became a nucleus round which all the revolutionary elements in London gathered. He was soon joined by V. D. Savarkar at present one of the great leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha. Savarkar even before he started for London had distinguished himself as a revolutionary along with his elder brother Ganesh Savarkar, and they had founded the Abhinava Bharat Society.

Two Prophets of Indian Nationalism



Sri Aurobindo
Revolutionary, Philosopher,
Poet and Sage.



Veer Savarkar.
Rebel, Convict and Statesman.

They exiled themselves to give us a Home.



S. Ajit Singh, who left home in 1907 to work abroad for Indian Freedom and returned in 1947, to die on the 15th of August. He was an uncle of S. Bhagat Singh. Sitting with him are Bhagat Singh's two brothers, Kulbir and Kartar & father, S. Kishen Singh. The family has played a great role in India's Struggle.



Shri Rash Behari Bose

He died before his dream came true.



Raja Mahendra Pratap

His life has been an Odyssey of Indian Freedom. He returned to his country on the eve of freedom and is still an active worker.

Savarkar Takes the Lead

Savarkar's arrival in London helped to galvanise the revolutionary movement there. The India house founded by Shyamji became a famous place frequented by all the progressive Indians. The Government became alarmed because the Indian students in London were rapidly going over to the side of the nationalist cause. A question was asked in the Parliament as to whether the government were aware of the seditious activity of the India House people. This put Shyamji on the guard. He at once shifted his head quarters to Paris and from there he began to guide the budding revolutionaries. The Indian Sociologist however continued to be published from London.

Gradually V. D. Savarkar became the chief in London. This was quite natural in view of the fact that he was on the spot, and more active and militant than Shyamji. It was under his leadership that in May 1908 the 1857 revolution day was celebrated in London with eclat. Nearly one hundred Indian students, that is the bulk of them, attended the celebration. On this occasion a leaflet entitled 'Oh Martyrs' was distributed among the participants. It seems that the persons attending the celebration were presented with numerous copies of the leaflet so that they might send them in their letters to India. According to police report this leaflet was printed in the French press under the patronage of Shyamji. Another leaflet entitled 'Grave Warning' was published during this period. V. D. also wrote a history of the "War of Independence" in Marathi. He used to translate passages from it in the Sunday meetings of Indian revolutionaries in London. This book could not be printed in Marathi. Ultimately the revolutionaries succeeded in getting its English translation printed in Holland. Copies of the book were smuggled in India through various ingenuous devices. One of the persons who helped in smuggling was Sir Sikandar Hayat, then a student in England.

Sir Curzon Wylie Murdered

The Government was not sitting on the fence. Sir Curzon Wylie was appointed to look after the interests of the Indian students at London. In reality he was acting as a spy on the militant Indian student fraternity of London. He took note of 'suspicious' cases, and tried by hook or crook to cow them down. Thus he became a complete nuisance. On the 1st of July 1909 Madanlal Dhingra shot at him from close range at a gathering in the Imperial Institute in London. Dhingra was a Punjabi student and had gone to London for further studies. He was arrested on the spot, tried and hanged. In the course of a brilliant statement in the court he said *inter alia* "A dependent nation that is held down by alien bayonets must be understood to be in an eternal state of war with the victors." He put forth a strong plea for a ceaseless struggle with the alien bureaucracy till independence was achieved.

Ganesh Savarkar Convicted

Ganesh Savarkar was busy organising political conspiracies in Maharashtra. Sometime before the murder of Sir Curzon Wylie he was hauled in under section 121 of the I. P. C. The authorities could not find any substantial proof of his conspiratorial activities, so he was clapped in prison for a bunch of poems entitled "The laghu avinava Bharat mela". For a few verses he was convicted to transportation for life. In this connection it is interesting to note that the convicting judge remarked that "the writer's main object is to preach war against the present government in the names of certain gods of the Hindus and certain warriors such as Shivaji. These names are a mere pretext". I have quoted the remarks of the judge to show that although these revolutionaries used religious symbols, and some of these happened to be of anti-Muslim character, in reality there was nothing anti-Muslim about these people. At the same time it should be noted that although not representing anti-Muslim sentiments those symbols of a definitely Hindu tint kept away the Muslims from the fold of the revolutionary movement. Historically this was a first class calamity.

The murder of Jackson and other conspiracies

Mr. Jackson the magistrate of Nasik, who had committed Ganesh Savarkar for trial was shot dead on the 21st December 1909. A number of persons were ultimately hanged for this murder. A conspiracy called the Nasik conspiracy was started by the police, and a number of young men were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. In Gwalior also a conspiracy case was started and many young men were convicted. It was found in course of the investigation of these conspiracies that there was a widespread armed conspiracy to end British rule in India.

V. D Sent to the Andamans

It was found that V. D. Savarkar even prior to his journey to England had laid the foundations of these conspiracies. He was brought down as a prisoner from England. As a prisoner on board the ship he managed to escape from the ship, and swam to the French coast. He was however arrested and brought to India, but his arrest by British police on the French coast gave rise to an important issue of international Law and brought the question of Indian freedom before the world, as nothing else had done. V. D. was sentenced to transportation for life and sent to the far-away Andamans, where his brother and so many other revolutionaries had already been sent.

Bengali Bhadralok Class

Now the scene shifts to Bengal. It was in Bengal that British rule had come first of all. There a new class called the *bhadralok* class had come into being. For decades this class had been very peaceful and it was the chief pillar of advancing British imperialism. During 1857 the bhadralok class of Bengal had sided completely with the British rulers. They were employed in the subordinate services. After a few decades Bengali bhadralok people began to be elbowed out. Also the educated class began to realise that all higher posts were closed to them and they were of a slave race. This caused widespread discontent among the educated Bengalis. It was not a mere accident that Bengalis became the pioneers in the national movement of India. The friends of yesterday thus turned the deadliest foes.

The Universities Bill and the Partition of Bengal

The situation was already tense in Bengal. In the meantime as if adding insult to injury Lord Curzon introduced a bill called the Universities Bill which was rightly interpreted by politically conscious people as designs to limit the number of Indians educated in English, and thus to retard national advance. This discontent spread among the English educated classes. An unheard of agitation greeted the bill. Already the atmosphere was impregnated with thunder. At this time Lord Curzon fired another of his rockets. He declared that Bengal must be divided for administrative convenience.

This enraged the middle class Bengalis, and as the middle class Bengalis happened to be the ideologues of the people, unrest soon spread among the masses as well. The agitation for annulling the partition of Bengal assumed huge proportions, and from the biggest to the lowest all joined to undo what seemed to them at that time, to be a great national catastrophe. Thousands of largely attended meetings were held protesting against the move, poets came out with new songs of a militant type, the great Tagore himself became one of the leaders of the movement. The Government in its turn suppressed the meetings and public manifestations with the result that the Bengali youths drifted to secret societies.

Aurovindo and Barindra

Aurobindo Ghose and Barindra Kumar Ghose, sons of K. D. Ghose, a medical officer in Government employment came out as leaders of the militant youths of Bengal at that time. Barindra was born in 1880 in England, but had been brought to India as a child. Aurobindo had received all

his education in England. There he got a first class in the Cambridge University classical tripos. He wanted to go to the I. C. S. He passed all the requisite examinations for it, but was rejected in the final selection, because of his inability to ride. Aurobindo by his writings and Barindra by his organisational ability became the symbol of the new Bengal in revolt.

Barindra had definite ideas about political things. He was convinced that agitation alone could not liberate India. Barindra made an attempt to organise a secret society as early as 1904. But the ground was not yet ready, so he waited. When as a consequence of the partition of Bengal the ground was ready he embarked on his old scheme.

Alipore Conspiracy

Barindra became the leader of a big conspiracy known as the first Alipore conspiracy. All the persons participating in it were highly educated. Some of them had definite literary talents. Ultimately the conspiracy was unearthed. When the conspiracy was unearthed, all the accused persons came to the decision that as everything had been found out by the C. I. D., all the accused persons should make a clean breast of everything in order that that the countrymen should be able to know what their organisation had done. Barindra made a revealing statement.

Contacting the People

Upendranath Banerjee, one of the leaders of the conspiracy, said in the course of his confession, "As I thought that people of India could not be made to do any work except through religion, I sought the help of *Sadhus*. Failing Sadhus I fell upon the school boys and collected them to give the religious, moral and political education. Since then I have been merely engaged in teaching boys about the state of our country, the need of independence. I preached that the only way left to us was to fight for our independence, to start secret societies in different parts of our country. To propagate ideas, collect arms and finally rise in rebellion when the time shall be ripe."

Jugantar, the organ of the party had seven thousand subscribers in 1907. In 1908 the number of subscribers increased still more, but during this year it was suppressed according to the Newspaper's Incitement to Offences Act. Sir Lawrence Jenkins commenting on the file of the Jugantar said, "They exhibit a burning hate of the British race. They breath revolution in every line. They point out how the revolution is to be effected. No calumny and no artifice is left out which is likely to instill the people of the country with the same idea or to catch the impressionable mind of the youth." Apart from the Jugantar the revolutionaries published many pamphlets, songs etc. In every way possible the revolutionaries with their meagre means tried to contact the masses and inculcate in them revolutionary ideas.

Khudiram

Khudiram was one of the members of the Alipore group. He was sent all the way to Muzaffarpore to shoot Mr. Kingsford, who as the Presidency Magistrate at Calcutta had made himself a nuisance to revolutionaries by inflicting heavy punishments on revolutionaries brought in his court for trial. Khudiram failed to identify Mr. Kingsford and he wrongly threw a bomb on the carriage of Mrs and Miss Kennedy. Both of them were killed. Khudiram was caught, tried and hanged. He was barely fifteen when he was hanged. His youthful appearance as well as the placid indifference with which he bore all the torture and braved death endeared him to his countrymen, and his name penetrated the masses multiplied through thousands of songs and legends.

Approver Shot in Prison

Another member of the conspiracy Kanailal who was at that time a undertrial in the Alipore jail shot Narendra Goswami, the approver in the case. This created a great stir in the country because of its romantic and moral background. Narendra Goswami was being considered public enemy

number one by the people, so his murder came as a great relief to thousands of people who considered revolutionaries to be heroes. Surendranath Banerjee, the uncrowned king of Bengal is supposed to have distributed sweets in the office of the "Bengali" a daily edited by him, when he received this news. More than a lac of people attended the cremation ceremony of the martyr Kanailal. The enormous mass wept like one man before his funeral pyre, and when his mortal body had been burnt to ashes, people advanced towards the pyre with awe and reverence collected the ashes to be worn as a talisman by their children and others.

Temporary Setback

For the time being, after the Alipore conspiracy, the revolutionary movement subsided, but once started it never really died away. In 1911 the Government again joined the split parts of Bengal, but this did not end the revolutionary movement. The revolutionary movement of Bengal had taken its birth in the anti-partition, but it did not stop there. The objective before it was no longer the unity of Bengal, but it was independence. Emissaries from Bengal went to other provinces and tried to sow the seeds of revolution. One such emissary was Rashbehari Bose. He was a clerk in the Dehra Dun Forest Office. From there he organised branches of the party in various parts of Northern India.

Bomb on Lord Hardinge

On the 23rd December 1912 Lord Hardinge was entering Delhi in state with great pomp and show. A bomb was thrown at him from some unknown quarter. The Viceroy was injured. One of his bodyguards died instantaneously. The assailant or assailants could not be traced. After a long investigation thirteen persons were tried in a case which became known as the Delhi conspiracy case. Master Amir Chand, Awadh Behari, Bal Mukund and Basant Kumar were sentenced to be hanged in this case and other accused persons were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. Rashbehari, the chief accused could not be apprehended.

Armies Tackled with Success

During the World War I, revolutionaries tried to tamper with the Indian section of the army, and they succeeded to a great extent. Many Indian armies had signified their readiness to rise in rebellion in case there was a general rising. The Ghadr Party of America contributed greatly to the success of the movement inside the army.

The Birth of the Ghadr Party

The Ghadr Party was originally a party of Indians in America. It had no revolutionary aims in the beginning. It only sought to organise the Indians in Amrica for economic interest vis a vis the American. In Oregon, Kashiram, Keshar Singh, Bhagat Singh, alias Gandhi Singh, Sohan Singh, Uddham Singh, Harnam Singh Tandhilat and other Indians had organised an association of Indians to improve their conditions. In California also such an organisation had sprung up independently of the Oregon organisation. The Oregon Indians secured the co-operation of Lala Hardayal, and after some talks all such organisations were amalgamated as the "Hindi (Indian) Association of America." Later on this Hindi Association was transformed into the Ghadr Party. In the meantime, the Indians in America had come to realise that until they were free in their own country, they could not be held in respect in foreign countries. Accordingly a strong organisation having its ramification throughout the whole world, specially in America was set up. Baba Sohan Singh and Kesar Singh became the president and vice-president of the party. Lala Hardayal became the general secretary, and Pandit Kashiram was elected the treasurer.

Party Propaganda

The centre of the party was situated in San Francisco. San Francisco was chosen as the centre, because more Indians lived in California than in any other single place. A paper called the "Ghadr" was published from the centre, and Lala Hardayal became its editor. The first number of the Ghadr appeared in November 1913.

Conference of the Ghadr Party

With a view to secure co-operation of as many Indians as possible a conference of Indians in America was held in February 1914 at Stockton. The famous Punjabi revolutionary Jwala Singh presided over this conference. This conference was attended among others by Sohan Singh, Kesar Singh, Karta Singh, Lala Hardayal, Taraknath Das, Prithvi Singh, Karam Singh, Bakhsha Singh, Santhokh Singh, Jagat Ram, Dalip Singh Phal, Puran Singh, Niranjan Singh, Panderi, Kamar Singh Dhoot, Nidhan Singh Mahrori, Nidhan Singh Chagha and Arur Singh. According to the decision taken by the conference Baba Sohan Singh and Kesar Singh assisted by Bhagat Singh (not of the Saunders murder fame) and Kartar Singh were entrusted with the work of organising the party. This conference was followed by other conferences, in which apart from the persons enumerated Barkatulha, Bhagwan Singh, Ram Singh, took part. People were so serious about revolution that many people donated their whole bank accounts to the coffers of the party. Branches of the party were established in Canada, China, Panama and all the countries where Indians lived. The object of the party was the liberation of the whole mankind from the thraldom and exploitation. In India it aimed to establish a sovereign republic.

Komagatamaru

The American Govrnment was not very friendly disposed towards the Indians. It wanted to discourage them from settling in America. The same was the attitude of the Canadian Government. The Privy Council of Canada gave a ruling to the effect that Indians could be allowed to disembark on the soil of Canada only if the ship on which they travelled came directly to Canada. Now there was no shipping line which directly connected Indian with Canada. In other words this ruling was tantamount to the prohibition of Indian immigration in Canada. The Indians sent Sardar Nand Singh to represent their case before the Canadian Congress, but in vain. Then they tried other means. They chartered a ship—the 'Komagata Maru' and directly reached Vancouver on the 23rd May 1914. Even then the Canadian Government refused the passengers the permission to disembark. After two months of fruitless negotiations the ship had to return along with the passengers. In the meantime some revolutionaries had joined the crew, and the passengers had been mainly converted to the revolutionary mode of thinking. The ship reached Budgebudge near Calcutta. The Government of India being forearmed wanted to arrest all the passengers, and send them directly under police surveillance to the Punjab. But the passengers refused, and there was a gun fight between the police party and the passengers resulting in several deaths. Baba Guru dutt Singh the person who had staked all his property to charter the ship, and 28 other persons escaped the vigilance of the police, and managed to slip to various parts of India. Baba Gurudutt Singh remained in hiding for seven years, and it was only in 1921 during the days of the non-cooperation movement that he surrendered to the police.

Contact with Germany

The history of the members of the Ghadr Party in America reads like a romance. It is not possible to go into further detail in the present context. The leaders of the Gadar party contacted German agents and strove to foment revolution in India with German arms and money. As soon as the first world war started many Indian residents in foreign countries at once saw the possibilities of linking up the revolutionary movement of India with Germany as early as 1911. Von Bernhardi in his book "Germany and the next war" had suggested the possibility of linking up the revolutionary movement in Bengal with German war efforts. On the 6th March 1914 the famous German paper "Berliner Tageblatt" had published an article entitled "the Indian danger to England". In this article it was shown that the situation in India was very fluid, and secret societies were at work. It was specially mentioned in the article that in San Francisco a huge preparation for an armed rising in India was going on.

Conspiracy in Europe

In September 1914 a young Tamil named Champak Raman Pillay who was the president of the International pro-India Committee of Zurich wrote to the German consul in Zurich asking permission to print anti-British literature in Germany. His petition met with favourable results and in October of the same year Pillay shifted to Berlin, and there he began to work under the supervision of the foreign department of Germany. There he founded the Indian National Party, which had close contacts with the German general staff. Among the members of the party we find the names of Hardayal, Tarakanth Das, Barkatulla, Chandra Chakravarty and Heramba Lal Gupta. The last named two persons had stood their trial in the San Francisco conspiracy.

The first I. N. A.

With the help of Indian revolutionaries a huge amount of anti-British literature was printed in Germany. The literature was circulated throughout the world. Apart from the production and distribution of revolutionary literature the Indian revolutionaries appointed Barkatulla to convert those Indian soldiers who fell into German hands. Thus the nucleus for the first Indian National Army was created.

Pingle Hanged

In November 1914, Pingle and Satyendra Sen arrived in India by the *Salamis*. Pingle went to organise rebellion in Northern India. He was arrested within the boundaries of the Meerut cantonment, with high explosives, and was hanged.

Guns Running in Huge Quantities

The revolutionaries also smuggled arms in huge quantities with the help of German agents. Jitendranath Lahiri brought a message to Indian revolutionaries from Europe that they should get in contact with the German agent in Batavia for arms. Accordingly Narendra Bhattacharya alias Martin now M. N. Roy was sent to Batavia. Another revolutionary Abani Mukerjee was sent to Japan for the same purpose. Narendra met Theodore Holferich, who told him that a ship with its cargo of arms was on the way to Karachi. At this Narendra said that the ship might be sent to Raimangal in the Sunderbans. This ship contained 30,000 rifles and there were 400 cartridges for every rifle. Raimangal became the centre of various arms smuggling activities. We need not go into details, but there is no doubt about it that the Indo-German conspiracy assumed very huge proportions. The Emden and the Maverick and some other ships took part in the conspiracy. For some time the Emden remained a bogey to the British navy. But for certain accidents an armed rising in Bengal and other provinces would have become a reality. In the course of this conspiracy Indian revolutionaries showed enormous pluck and courage. They received the respect of the German general staff, and were acknowledged to be very good stuff for the military department in any country.

The Mainpuri Conspiracy

All the revolutionaries in India were not working in a single party. There were different parties and organisations among them. One such party was that of Pandit Genda Lal Dikshit of Mainpuri. Dikshitji was an ordinary school master, but getting inspiration from the writings of revolutionaries he organised a party of young men. He thought that for his purpose decoits could also be useful, so he tried to organise decoits also, but in this he was not very successful, because the decoits cared for personal gain more than anything else. He however got some funds from the decoits, which were utilised for the revolutionary party. Ultimately Gendalalji was arrested with his party. But he managed to escape from jail, fell ill and died a free man. Others of his party were convicted to various terms of rigorous imprisonment. They were however let out on the termination of the war in general amnesty. Ramprasad Bismil, an absconder in the case could not be arrested till the very last. He was destined to become the leader of the military side in the Kakori case.

The Benares Conspiracy

Benares had the honour to become one of the chief centres of the revolutionaries during the first world war. Sachindranath Sanyal the right-hand man of Rashbehary was the leader of this centre. The centre succeeded in contacting the army, and spreading among them revolutionary literature. At the failure of their activities the chief members were arrested and tried in the Benares conspiracy case. Among other members of this party was Damodar Swarup Set of Bareily. Sachindranath Sanyal was given transportation for life.

Muslim Revolutionaries

It will not be out of place here to relate in short the part which the Muslims played in the revolutionary movement during this period. Owing to some reason or other—we shall not go into details—the Muslims were not so active in this sphere as the Hindus were. It is also true that middle class Muslims have been prone to look towards Turkey and other Islamic countries more than they looked to India. During the Crimean war the Indian Muslims sympathised with Turkey. During the Italo-Turkish war and other subsequent events in the Balkans this feeling became more manifest. The Muslims of India also resented that Iran had been divided into British and Russian spheres of influence without any reference to the wish of the Iranese. When in the first world war Turkey joined the German side, British statesmen understood that there would be discontent among the Indian Muslims. So they came out with a proclamation that Britain had no intention of harming Turkey. The Nizam obviously under instructions from the British Government published a Letter to the same effect.

Pan Islamic Activities

This however did not subside the unrest among muslims. Apart from other manifestations some Maulavis of Deobund engaged in a conspiracy to subvert the British Government. Obeidullah, a Maulavi of Deobund took the lead. He was a convert from Sikhism. At first he approached the Maulavis who gave him a good hearing. Maulana Mahmud Hussein, the chief Maulavi of Deobund also joined him. The ideas of these Maulavis were not really nationalistic. They dreamed of the revival of Muslim rule in India. In order to mature the scheme Obeidullah and Mahmud Hussein went out of India. Obeidullah tried to pursue Islamic states to invade India.

From Pan Islamism to Nationalism

His scheme envisaged an invasion on India by some Islamic state outside India, and simultaneous rising in India. He, however, failed to induce any Islamic state to undertake the project. He then concentrated on the rising in India. A provisional government was formed in Kabul in which Raja Mahendra Pratap was given the post of the president. By experience Obeidullah and other Muslim conspirators had abandoned pan-Islamic ideas. He had found out that other Indians were engaged in the same kind of activities as he. So he thought of combining with them and working against the British together. The result was the provisional government which I have just now mentioned.

Provisional Government at Kabul

Obeidullah himself had taken the post of a minister in the Government. Barkatulla was to become the prime minister. By the way, it might be mentioned that Barkatulla was a resident of Bhupal and had gone to Tokyo as a professor of Hindusthani in the University there. At Tokyo he used to edit a paper called the "Islamic Fraternity". This paper was stopped by the Japanese Government on the request of the British Government. He was also removed from the post of professorship of the Tokyo University. Since then he had been devoting his whole time to revolutionary work.

Epistles to the Czar and the Caliph

This provisional government at Kabul sent letters to the Czar and other Powers requesting

them to end their alliance with British imperialism, and use their energies to bring about a revolution in India. These letters were signed by Raja Mahendra Pratap, the provisional president. The epistle to the Czar was sent in a golden plate. Another letter which was meant for the Sultan of Turkey was written on yellow silk. This was not done for ornamental purposes but it was done to avoid detection by the police. A piece of silk with whatever inscription on it could escape the vigilance of the police easily.

Silk Letter Conspiracy

Such letters were sent to centres in India as well. These letters contained instructions for the preparation of the revolution, as well as the report of things done in other parts of the world. When ultimately the whole conspiracy came to the notice of the police, it became known as the Silk Letter Conspiracy case.

The Rowlatt Committee

The revolutionary movement in India had assumed such huge proportions that it had become a constant source of headache to the Government of India. Hence the government appointed a committee presided over by justice Rowlatt to "investigate and report on the nature and extent of the criminal conspiracies connected with the revolutionary movement in India and to examine and consider the difficulties that have arisen in dealing with such conspiracies, and to advise as to the legislation, if any, necessary to enable government to deal effectively with them

The Black Report

This Committee submitted a big report running to hundreds of pages. The reports suggested curtailment in the already limited civil liberties of the people. The report not only dealt with the suppression of terroristic organisations, but it also wanted to take away the rights of free speech and writing. Whatever we in our compartmental method of thinking may confabulate, but the committee viewed the actions of Lokamanya, Chapekar, Indo-German conspirators, Bipin Paul, Khudiram in the same manner. All of them were equally reprehensible in the eyes of the committee.

Movement Against the Rowlatt Bill

The Congress condemned the report, and Mahatma Gandhi came out with the statement that if the bill proposed on the basis of the Rowlatt report were passed into law he would inaugurate satyagraha in the country. We cannot afford to dilate on the topic as to how Gandhiji became the idol of the people, because at such a juncture when India was feeling quite helpless, he came out with a weapon that promised hope and salvation There were big hartals against the report. The Jullianwalla episode was a sequel to this movement. We shall not also relate in detail how from this agitation against the Rowlatt report the non-cooperation movement grew. But let me point out—here is a definite case where one can see how the revolutionary movement and the wider national movement interpenetrated and commingled.

Hindustan Republican Association

It is a fact of history that, during the whole course of the non-cooperation movement, which was prompted as an experiment in non-violence the revolutionary movement in India was held in abeyance. But as soon as the movement was withdrawn by its sponsor on the events at Chauri Chaura the revolutionaries came out with their modus operandi after their long hibernation. The Anushilan and Sachindranath Sanyal started organising revolutionary groups in Northern India. Ultimately the Anushilan withdrew from Northern India, and the whole of Northern India came under one revolutionary organisation viz., the Hindusthan Republican Association. The ultimate object of the party was to end exploitation of man by man throughout the world, but its immediate object was to found a federated republic of the united states of India by an armed and organised revolution.

The Ideal and Object

Many leaflets were published in pursuance of this conspriacy in which the masses were asked



Shri Jai Prakash Narain

General Secretary of the Socialist Party.



The Socialist Party High Command.

From left to right :

1. Ashok Mehta. 2. Subrayan. 3. Ram Manohar Lohia. 4. Mohan Lal Gautam (since resigned). 5. Munshi Ahmeddin. 6. Sukhen Dutt. 7. Jaiprakash Narain. 8. Parshotamtikam Dass. 9. S. M. Joshi. 10. K. B. Menon. 11. Achyut Patvardhan. 12. Ram Nandan Mishra.



Sh. Sucheta Kripalani

Secretary Womens Department of the AICC & Kasturba Memorial work. Member Consembly. She has worked indefatigably for communal peace and riot sufferers.



All-India Women's Conference.

to adopt the revolutionary path as the British could only be brought to their senses by revolution. In one of these leaflets it was said that the Soviet Russia among modern states was the ideal of the revolutionaries in India. It also said that the party was not one of terrorists but when necessary it could enter into a vigorous campaign to punish those who harmed the cause of the country.

Kakori Train Hold-up

For funds the party relied on subscriptions but as subscriptions were not sufficient for running the party machine, village dacoities were committed to fill the coffers of the party. In August 1925 a train was held up at Kakori near Lucknow, and the safe containing the earnings of the railway was broken open and looted. The spectacular manner in which the hold-up was executed, the political slogans which were advanced during the commission of the hold-up, the high calibre of the persons who were subsequently arrested made it one of the most important episodes of the revolutionary history of India.

Four Hanged, Others Convicted

Pandit Ramprasad Bismil, a poet of no mean merit, Rajendra Nath Lahiri, a student of the M.A. in the Benares Hindu University, Roshan Singh, Ashfaqu Ullah, a Pathan student of Shahjanpore were hanged in the Kakori conspiracy case. Sachindra nath Sanyal and Jogesh Chandra Chatterjee who were already in Bengal jail when the Kakori train hold-up occurred, were brought all the way to Lucknow to stand this trial in the case. They were given transportation for life. Other members of the conspiracy were awarded various terms of imprisonment. The writer of this article was awarded 14 years R. I. in the said conspiracy, and was released after being in jail continually for 12 years by the first Congress Ministry of the U.P.

Activities in Bengal

Bengal did not remain behind. On the 3rd August 1923 some revolutionaries looted the Sankaritola Post Office in Calcutta. On the 9th December 1923 the anniversary of the Martyr Jatin Mukherjee was celebrated with eclat in Calcutta. In December 1923 revolutionaries in Chittagong committed a dacoity and decamped with Rs. 18,000.

Gopimohan Saha

In 1924 Gopimohan Saha shot and killed one Mr. De an English merchant. In reality he wanted to shoot Sir Charles Tegart the famous police official who had sent many a revolutionary to the gallows. Gopimohan submitted a very brilliant statement in court, in which after expressing regret for having shot an innocent Englishman by mistake, he said that the way of revolution was the only way of dealing with the British rulers. He said that non-violence was futile vis-a-vis the Englishman. Gopimohan Saha was a youngster of sixteen. The fact that he went to the gallows very bravely put additional weight to his statement. Indeed a resolution was passed extolling his bravery in the next provincial conference of Bengal held at Serajgunj. Gandhiji who had been released from jail by this time on medical grounds took exception to this resolution. There was a long and protracted controversy on this resolution between Gandhiji and C. R. Das who had taken up the cudgels on behalf of the revolutionaries.

Cawnpore Bolshevik Conspiracy

Along with conspiracies of a more or less terroristic and blanquistic nature a new kind of conspiracy had appeared on the scene. In 1917 the people of Russia had been emancipated from the Czarist shackles. Thus far socialism was only an idea, more or less of an Utopia, but the realization of socialism in Russia made it into a living historical force. Naturally the downtrodden people of the East began to look towards new Russia for inspiration and emancipation. Narendra Bhattacharya, now M. N. Roy, once a terrorist took a leading part in linking up India and Russia. He had been in exile a long time. It was during his exile that the Russian revolution occurred. He went to Russia, and from there began to contact

Indians in India. In 1920 some Indian Muslims who had left India in Hijrat i. e., in religious protest met him, and came under the Russian influence. Among Russia-returned Hijratis, Shaukat Osmani and some other Muslims played a great part in bringing Russian ideas of revolutionary organisation and method in India. They returned to India and contacted persons in India. They tried to set up organisation among the labourers and the petty bourgeoisie. This incurred the wrath of the government and after sometime the Cawnpore conspiracy case was started. S. A. Dange, Shaukat Osmani, Muzaffar Ahmad and Nalini were convicted to four years' R. I. As M.N. Roy was outside India, he could not be arrested. This conspiracy focussed the attention of the country to a new method and goal. Although the conspiracy was found out, the proceedings of the case made a deep impression on the youth of India.

Babbar Akali Agitation

In the Punjab the Babbar Akali agitation deserves special mention. All the movements enumerated in this essay were more or less confined to the educated middle class. But the Babbar Akali agitation was a mass movement of the Sikhs in the Punjab. Kishan Singh Gargaj, one of the leaders of this movement was a resident of Jullundar. He was a havildar in the cavalry, but like other soldiers he did not confine himself to his military duties. He used to read the daily papers, and had been deeply moved by the Jallianwala massacre and subsequent events. The incident at Nankana on the 20th February, 1921 in which innocent Sikhs were butchered proved the last straw for him. He resigned his havildarship and like an inspired person went from village to village preaching hymns of hatred against white rulers. In the same manner Karam Singh and Udai Singh were organising the poor peasantry in the district of Hoshiarpur. Kishan Singh's party was originally called Chakravarty party, i. e., a party of the conquerors of the world but when it was amalgamated with other parties of the same nature, the resultant organisation was named the "Babbar Akali". A paper named "Babbar Akali" began to appear under the editorship of Karam Singh. Gradually the party began to collect stocks of guns, revolvers, bombs etc. The party also worked to spread disaffection in the army. The leaders of the party came to the conclusion that it was due to traitors that the previous attempts of revolution had failed, therefore they decided to end the lives of traitors, real and potential. One of the main methods of the party was that suddenly a speaker would appear in a village, assemble the villagers, preach revolution and disappear before the police could catch him.

Terrorism By Babbar Akali

On the 14th of February 1923 the Diwan of Haiyatpur was killed. On the 27th March, Hazara Singh of Baibalpur was killed. Several other persons were also killed or maimed as the merit of the case required.

The Bomely Fight

Dhanna Singh and Banta Singh killed Bishan Singh as he was suspected of having given information to the police on several occasions. They also killed Buta a village headman for being an informer. They killed several other such suspicious characters. Naturally the police was on the lookout of these men. One day Karam Singh, Udai Singh, Kisan Singh and some others of the party were passing near the village Bomely. The police got information and surrounded them. Shots were exchanged. Udai Singh and Mahendra Singh died on the spot. Karam Singh entered a pool, and half immersed in water he continued to fire on the police party. But he was shot. Bisan Singh was also killed. This event occurred on the 1st December 1923, but these shootings encouraged rather than discouraged the movement.

Dhanna Singh's Revenge

Dhanna Singh could not be arrested for a long time. On the 25th October 1923 Dhanna Singh was induced by Jwala Singh, an informer of the police to go to a certain place, where he was surrounded by the police. When Dhanna Singh

realised that he had been betrayed, he wanted to whip out his revolver, but before doing so he was overpowered. Dhanna Singh had a live bomb concealed near his belt. After arrest he struck the bomb in such a manner that it exploded with the result that he was killed, but along with him five policemen including an Englishman named Horton were killed.

Six Persons Hanged

Ultimately the Babbar Akali conspiracy was suppressed. 88 persons were hauled in a case, among which 6 persons namely Dharam Singh, Santa Singh, Dalip Singh, Kisan Singh, Gargajj, Nand Singh, and Karam Singh were hanged, other accused persons getting other terms of imprisonment.

Deoghar Conspiracy

In Bihar there was a conspiracy called the Deoghar conspiracy. This was an offshoot of the Kakori conspiracy. Birendra and Surendra Bhattacharya of Benares were the chief organisers of the conspiracy. In its nature and scope it was similar to its parent conspiracy. Ultimately some persons were arrested and awarded various terms of imprisonment, the highest punishment of 10 years R. I. being given to Sailendra Chakravarti.

Mahindra Banerji and Ramesh Gupta

The four hangings of the Kakori conspiracy had created a stir among young men. There were several attempts to avenge their deaths. Two such attempts deserve special mention. Manindranath Banerjee of Benares fired at Mr. Banerjee a D. S. P. who was partly responsible for the success of the Kakori case. Manindra was given 10 years' R. I. He died in the Central Jail of Fatehgarh as a result of hunger strike which he had undertaken for the amelioration of C class political prisoners. The other attempt was made by Ramesh Gupta of Cawnpore. He tried to shoot Virbhadra at Orai, who had been playing double game with the revolutionaries. The immediate cause of Ramesh's wrath was that Virbhadra had betrayed Chandrasekhar Azad.

Attempt to Murder Sir Simon

The appointment of a Royal Commission presided over by Sir Simon to enquire into and report on the future reforms was greeted with anger and indignation by the people of India. The revolutionaries reacted in their own way. Manmohan Gupta, Markandaya and Harendra all of Benares conspired between themselves to blow up the train of Sir John Simon. As the police were more vigilant in the U. P. they decided to undertake the work in an out of the way place in the province of Bombay. Accordingly the conspirators started from Benares with one dynamite, several bombs and pistols for their objective. But the bombs exploded in the train near Manmad. The explosion was so loud that it was heard from a distance of 40 miles. The roof of the railway carriage in which the revolutionaries were travelling was blown off, and the train went off the rails. Markandaya died on the spot. Harendra became unconscious. Some other passengers also died. When Harendra gained consciousness in a hospital, he made a clean breast of everything. Ultimately Harendra who retracted his confession and Manmohan were sentenced to 7 years' R. I. each.

Lalaji's Death Sets Revolutionaries Thinking

The Simon Commission visited Lahore on the 20th October 1928, and there was altogether a different kind of repercussion. There Lala Lajpat Rai while leading the boycott demonstration against the commission received lathi blows from the police. These blows ultimately resulted in his death. He was too old to stand the lathi blows and he succumbed to his injuries on the 17th November. His death was taken as a national calamity, and the whole of India felt helpless before this uncalled for insult of the nation. At this juncture the Hindusthan Socialist Republican Association the only revolutionary party of Northern India decided to retaliate the national insult. By the way it might be told that this party was a continuation of the party to which the Kakori group belonged. Indeed

Chandrasekhar Azad the chief military leader of this party was one of the absconders in the Kakori conspiracy case, and Bhagat Singh was one of the unimportant members of the Kakori group itself.

Mr. Saunders Murdered

Bhagat Singh and Azad decided to kill the official responsible for the assault on Lala Lajpat Rai. Accordingly they both along with Shiva Ram Rajguru, and Jaygopal were lying in wait for Mr. Saunders near his office on the 15th December 1928. Mr. Saunders came out of his office at 4 p. m. accompanied by his orderly Chanan Singh. As soon as the motor cycle of Mr. Saunders was in full speed, the revolutionaries spotted him out and shot at him. It is said that Rajguru's bullet struck him dead, and he at once fell down. It often happened that officials shot by revolutionaries revived later on. So Bhagat Singh in order to be sure emptied his revolver on the already fallen Mr. Saunders. The orderly tried to give chase to the revolutionaries. The revolutionaries had to shoot him although they had no intention of killing him.

Lahore Conspiracy

Ultimately this incident became the nucleus of a conspiracy, and the Lahore conspiracy was the result. The persons accused in this case made a mark on the contemporary history of India by their courage, intellect and tact. As for Bhagat Singh he was arrested when he along with Batukeshwar Dutt threw a bomb in the Central Assembly on the 8th April 1929.

Assembly Bomb Case

At that time the Public Safety Bill had been under discussion in the Assembly. The Trades Disputes Bill had been passed by a majority, and President Patel was on the point of giving his ruling on the Public Safety Bill. The atmosphere was tense with enthusiasm. All the eyes were riveted on the face of the President when the explosion occurred. Sir George Schuster the finance member and Sir Vamanji Dalal received slight injuries. The throwers of the bomb could easily take advantage of the resultant confusion but they stood there in the visitors' gallery giving forth slogans of Inquilab Zindabad i.e., Long Live Revolution. Bhagat Singh and B. K. Dutt were the originators of this slogan which subsequently became the battle cry of all militant elements in the country irrespective of party and creed.

Dictatorship of the Proletariat

They were arrested, and sent up for trial. In a very long statement, which since then has become a historic document, they said that the immediate aim of the revolutionary party was to bring about the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry in India. This statement was hailed as a great contribution to political thought. Their ideas received particular attention, because their words did not emanate from the chair of a professor, but they came forth from the mouths of the revolutionaries who were ready to lay down their lives for the fruition of their ideas.

Fight in Prison

Bhagat Singh and Dutt were awarded transportation for life in the assembly bomb case. They did not however sit quietly in jail. Inside the prison also they gave fight to imperialism. The Kakori prisoners had fought for special treatment to political prisoners. They had won in the fight, but the fruits of their victory had lasted as long as they were undertrials, but as soon as they were convicted, they were robbed of the special treatment so far allowed to them. They put up a stiff fight through hunger strike, but the leaders meditated and their fight was left half way. Bhagat Singh and his colleagues took up the fight from where the Kakori convicts had left it.

Jatin Das's Martyrdom

It was a historic hunger strike. The Government was adamant. Jatin Das, one of the Lahore conspirators, died after 64 days of hunger strike. His death was mourned by the whole nation. His dead body was taken from Lahore to Calcutta

in a special train. At every station thousands of people came to pay the martyr their last homage. When his dead body reached Calcutta, there was a sea of human heads to show its respects. Six lacs of people accompanied him to the cremation ground.

Partial Victory Attained

Bhagat Singh and his colleagues carried the fight for the rights of the political prisoners to its logical consequences. The writer of the article was at that time a long term convict in the Bareilly Central Jail. He was one of the hundreds of political prisoners throughout India who simultaneously struck hunger with the Lahore comrades. As a consequence of these hunger strikes and the death of Jatin Das the government had to come down from its olympic heights, and create the threefold classification of prisoners—into A, B, and C classes. Of course, this was not the object for which the political prisoners had been fighting, but on the whole it was an advancement and so the strike was called off.

Three Death Sentences

The Lahore conspiracy dragged on for a long time, ultimately it ended in the sentences of death passed on Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdeo. Others were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. Once again Chandrasekhar Azad could not be punished although he was the chief accused.

Attempt to Blow off Lord Irwin

The Lahore conspiracy was followed by many other conspiracies, in the Punjab and Delhi. We need not go into details. On the 23rd December 1929 the revolutionaries tried to blow off the train on which Lord Irwin was travelling. This had been done with great ingenuity, but it failed to kill the Viceroy who escaped death by a hair's breadth. It might be noted that it was on the 23rd December that a bomb was thrown on Lord Hardinge seventeen years ago. After a long investigation a conspiracy was started at Delhi and some revolutionaries were convicted.

Other Incidents

In 1930 the revolutionaries made an attempt to murder Khan Bahadur Abdul Aziz a police official who had become notorious in some revolutionary cases. The Gadodia stores were looted on the 6th June 1930. Other such incidents of a sporadic nature occurred, but it was obvious that this kind of revolutionary movement was now on the wane. Indian youths of a militant type were gradually realizing that whatever the utility of terrorism at a time when the mass movement was a non-existent at the present juncture mass organisations were the only method of bringing about revolution.

The Death of Azad

The death of Chandrasekhar Azad while fighting with a strong police party single handed as if heralded the end of an epoch which had been so glorious and in its train had produced a rich harvest of martyrs and heroes. On the 27th February 1931 he was surrounded by a police party in Alfred Park at Allahabad. He fought till the very last but died riddled with bullets. His life-story was a very thrilling one which covered the whole post-non-cooperation revolutionary epoch.

The Chittagong Armoury Raid

Now we shall turn our eyes to Bengal, where very important things were happening and where the revolutionary movement was still in full swing. In Bengal the terrorist movement had penetrated the masses more deeply. On the 12th March 1930 Gandhiji began his famous Dandi March. He was not arrested for a long time. When he changed his modus operandi and gave forth of taking by storm all the salt depots, then only he was arrested. His successor Abbas Tayabji was arrested on the 12th April. The country was in an electrified condition. At this most psychological moment seventy young men of Chittagong divided themselves into several parts and simultaneously raided the police line, telephone exchange and the F.I. Headquarters. Within 45

minutes they were masters of the city, the raid having begun at 9.45 p. m. and having ended at 10.30 p. m. Chittagong was cut off form Dacca and Calcutta. Railway lines, telephone connections and telegraph wires were cut. In the F. I. Headquarters the revolutionaries took possession of all the fire arms as also a Lewis gun. Some Englishmen, and Indian sentries were killed. The District Magistrate came to fight the revolutionaries but he was repelled.

The Fight at Jalalabad

As it was only an incident confined to Chittagong, very soon forces from all sides came, and the revolutionaries had to escape to the hills of Jalalabad. The military pursued them there. At first the military was repelled, but in the face of the well-equipped armies of British imperialism the revolutionaries suffered heavy losses. Nineteen youths were killed on the spot. All these young excepting one, were below twenty. Madhusudan Dutta and Naresh Rai killed on that day were 17, whereas Ardhendu Dastidar and Pravash nath Ball were 16. After this fight which has since become famous as the Jalalabad fight, the remaining revolutionaries spread away in all directions.

Chittagong Raiders Arrested

A group of these people was travelling by railway on the 22nd April. The police wanted to arrest them. Shots were exchanged and one Sub-Inspector and two constables died. On the 24th April Bikash Dastidar of this group finding himself surrounded by the police committed suicide rather than become a prisoner. Some important persons of this group were in hiding in French Chandannagar. The British police contrary to all notions of international law traced them to their hiding place on the French territory surrounded them and after a stiff gun fight arrested three persons. There was a fourth revolutionary there, who was shot dead. Ganesh Ghose one of the chief leaders of the Chittagong raid was arrested at Chandannagar.

Raiders Convicted

The Chittagong armoury raid prisoners were tried by a special tribunal, and on the first march 1932, the following were sentenced to transportation for life : (1) Anant Singh, (2) Loknath Bal, (3) Lal Mohan Sen, (4) Phanindra Nandi, (5) Sahairam Das, (6) Subodh Ray, (7) Ganesh Ghose, (8) Sukhendu Dastidar, (9) Anand Gupta, (10) Subodh Chaudary, (11) Fakir Sen and (12) Ranadhir Das Gupta. 16 persons were released for want of sufficient proof, but they were immediately arrested under the Bengal Ordinance. The Govt. could not suffer such dangerous persons to be out of prison.

The Chittagong revolutionaries had chosen the particular moment with a view to give the masses a revolutionary lead. But the country was not yet ready to follow in their foot-steps.

Laxmikanta Shukla and His Wife

On the 8th August, 1930 Laxmikanta Sukla, a young man from Cawnpore, entered the bungalow of Mr. Flowers, Commissioner of the Jhansi division. Mr. Flowers had made himself notorious by maltreating satyagrahi lady prisoners. Sukla had gone there to wreak vengeance, was arrested redhanded with a pistol and a live bomb. Sukla was known to Chandrasekhar Azad, but he had planned this particular action according to his own free will. The insult meted out to lady satyagrahis had infuriated him. He had asked none but his conscience. Laxmikanta Sukla was given transportation for life, and sent to the Andamans. In the Andamans after a certain time he was allowed to be a free prisoner i. e., for all practical purposes he became free with certain restrictions inside the island. His wife Shrimati Basumati Sukla joined him in his dreary life in the Andamans. Vishnu Sharan Dublis, a Kakori prisoner and now an M. L. A. of the United Provinces mostly lived with this couple as their guardian. It was after the first Congress ministry in the U. P. had taken power that Mr. Sukla was released and repatriated. Mrs. Sukla reminds of Sita, who went of her own accord with Rama to the forests in exile.

The Maulnia Dacoity

Bihar did not prove a good field for revolutionary activities. But in between some revolutionary waves reached Bihar. Jogendra Sukla was a member of the Benares Gandhi Ashram. There he came into contact with Chandrasekhar Azad and certain other revolutionaries, and he was admitted in the party. After the arrest of the Kakori group, he worked secretly in Bihar. He however all the time was in touch with Chandrasekhar Azad. When money was required for the defence of the Lahore case, a dacoity was committed in the village of Maulnia in the district of Champaran. The police after long investigation arrested some persons. Out of these Phanindra Ghose of Beltia turned approver and was later shot dead. Jogendra Sukla could not be arrested for a long time. He was finally arrested with three pistols, tried and sentenced to 22 years' R. I. Other unimportant incidents occurred in Bihar.

Punjab Governor Shot At

On the 23rd December 1930, a young man named Harikishan shot at and wounded the Governor of the Punjab when he was returning after delivering the Convocation address. Harikishan was a resident of Mardan, and had come in touch with the Punjab revolutionaries. He was arrested, tried and hanged.

Asanullah Murdered

After the Chittagong raid a reign of terror prevailed in Chittagong. Hindu youths of the *Bhadralok* class were ordered not to be seen outside their houses after sunset. A punitive police was also kept to harrass the people. The villages of the district were not exempted from police atrocities. Khan Bahadur Asanullah, the police chief was responsible for perpetrating atrocities. On the 30th August 1930 a youngster named Haripada Bhattacharya, who was barely 14 shot and killed him when he was returning after seeing a football match. Untold atrocities were committed on Haripada, and he was almost reduced to a cripple. He was given transportation for life. He was spared the rope because of his age.

Other Terrorist Acts

The history of the revolutionary movement of Bengal of the period was so rich in incidents that we can simply recount here the more important events. On 14th June 1930 a bomb factory was detected at Machuabazar. It resulted in a new case, and Dr. Narayan Banerjee, the leader of the group was awarded 10 years' R. I. On the 25 August 1930 again an attempt was made on the life of Sir Tegart. But again he escaped. Dinesh Mazumdar was awarded transportation for life, but his collaborator Anuj Gupta was killed on the spot. On the 29th August 1930 the Inspector General of Police Mr. Lowman was shot dead by a young man named Binoy Krishna Bose. Mr. Hudson who was accompanying the I. G. was also shot at, but he recovered although he had received two bullet wounds. On the 30th August a bomb was thrown on the house of Pavitra Bose, inspector of police at Mymensingh. Shovarani Dutta was arrested in this connection. Inspector Tarini Mukarjee was shot and killed while travelling in train. Later on Ramakrishna Biswas was hanged and Kalipada Chakravarty was given transportation for life for having shot Mukarjee.

The I. G. of Prisons Shot

Three revolutionaries entered the Writers Buildings in which the Bengal Secretariat was situated on the 8th December 1930. They forcibly entered the office of Mr. Simpson the Inspector General of Prisons, and fired at him. Mr. Simpson in all received nine bullets. He died on the spot. After killing Mr. Simpson the youths went to kill Mr. Nelson, the Judicial Secretary but failed to kill him. In the meantime the police had surrounded the building. All the three young men attempted to commit suicide, but only Sudhir Gupta succeeded. The other two were taken to hospital. Out of these Benoy Krishna Bose died on the 13th December. Before dying he made it clear that it was he who had shot Mr. Lowman Dinesh Gupta the third youth in this case was hanged.

Girls Also Shoot

On the 24th December 1931 two girls of the Faizunnisia Girls' School namely Shanti Ghose and Suniti Chaudhury acquired interview with Mr. B. G. Stevens the magistrate of Comilla with a ruse, and shot him dead. The girls were arrested and given transportation for life. On the 6th February, 1932 another girl Bina Das who went to receive the B. A. Degree shot at the Governor Sir Stanley Jackson. She fired five times, but failed to kill him. Bina Das was arrested, tried and sentenced to transportation for life.

Some Incidents Recounted

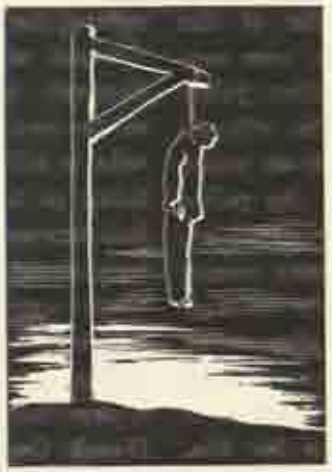
In Midnapore one after another three magistrates were killed. For a time the district of Midnapore became a place of terror for the I. C. S. people. Being posted there was supposed to be tantamount to receiving the sentence of death. On the 29th July, 1932 Mr. Elison the additional D. M. of Tippera was shot dead. On the 7th August Sir Alfred Watson, the editor of the Statesman was shot at when he was coming down from his motor car, but he was saved. The assailant could not be arrested as he at once took potassium cyanide. Sir Watson was shot because the Statesman was following an anti-Indian policy. On the 22nd August Mr. Grosby the additional S. P. of Dacca was shot at. On the 24th September 1932 a bomb was thrown on the European club at Chittagong resulting in the death of several Europeans. A hundred yards from the club the dead body of Priti Lata a girl revolutionary was recovered. On the 28th September Sir Alfred Watson was again shot at from a motor car, but he was again saved. On the 18th November Mr. Charles Luke, the Superintendent of Rajshahi Central Jail was fired upon but he escaped with some slight injuries. On the 8th May 1934 Sir John Anderson, the governor of Bengal, was shot at but he escaped by a hair's breadth.

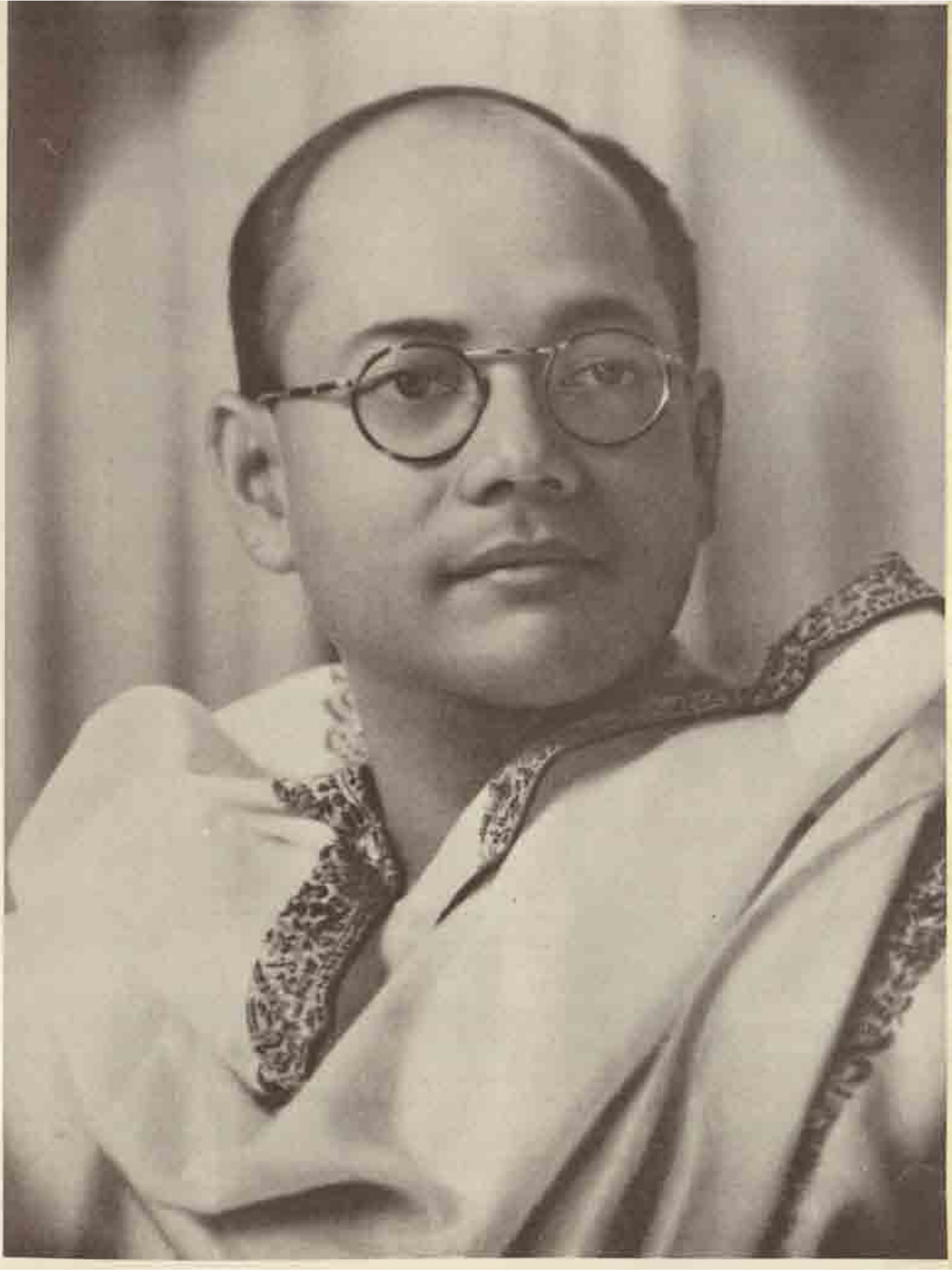
The End of Terrorism

It is not possible to recount all the incidents. It can be said without fear of contradiction that this phase of the revolutionary movement ended by 1934. By this time all the revolutionaries living inside prisons including those in the Andamans and all those still left outside had become convinced that the socialist method was more appropriate and only that method could bring about the emancipation of the toiling masses. Thus terrorism which could not be suppressed by Government atrocities, hangings and heavy sentences became a thing of the past history.

The revolutionary movement of this type was no longer appropriate in the present context. Revolutionaries began to be drawn to ideology and methods of socialism more and more. In this case history has repeated itself. The same was the sequence of movements in Russia.

Shahidon ki chitaon par lagenge har baras mele
vatan par marne walon ka-yahi baqi nishan hoga.
(Ram Prasad Bismil)







Satyen Bose.



Kanailal Dutta.



Khudiram Bose



Profulla Chaki.

CHAPTER XXX

ON TO BATTLE: ON TO DEATH

Saga of the I. N. A. & Its Netaji

Kaviraj Anath Nath Ray

[The Story of the Azad Hind Fauj, under the leadership of Netaji Subhas has been gratefully related in words and song, in pictures and drama, by several people, some of them having been prominent actors in the blazing drama.

It is perhaps realised instinctively, how this struggle was victorious, though it apparently failed. It may be recalled how when the Congress Working Committee were released, the country was found to be in a mood of frustration and despair. The British having come out victorious in the war, once again seemed invincible. Hindu Muslim unity seemed a dream. No doubt deep resentment and revolutionary urge lay underneath the apathy and quietness of the people. But Gandhiji and other leaders found themselves at wit's end about the next step.



Then a miracle happened. Three officers of the I. N. A. were put up for trial, a Hindu, a Muslim and a Sikh. The story that unfolded itself at this memorable trial at the Red Fort, of the aims and achievement of the I. N. A., its complete loyalty to the Indian National movement, the inspiring sacrifice and valour of our countrymen who participated in it, the achievement of cordial communal unity in its ranks under a great leader and fired with a supreme purpose, released a nationwide fervour and patriotic upheaval that was unprecedented. The events that followed this transmutation opened the eyes of the British to the realities as 1942 had failed to do. Also the I. N. A. stirred the imagination of the army, on whose perpetual loyalty the British had banked. The army had been witness to the retreats in Burma, Singapur and Malaya and the plight of the deserted Indian troops and population there as also to the racial discrimination in evacuation, and other war condition and only wanted this spark.

The I. N. A. thus succeeded in keeping its pledge to hoist the flag of Free India on the Red Fort of Delhi. Its great Netaji, who by the magic of his fervour and personality had succeeded beyond all others, in bringing together different Indians, of various religions and provinces, and in kindling ordinary clay with a divine flame fulfilled his word, and lives enshrined in the love and gratitude of his countrymen. The idealism and inspiration of the I. N. A. became a valuable asset with a vital part to play in translating the transfer of power to real freedom for the people and in retrieving the lost unity for our country.]

THIS is Subhas Chandra Bose, who is still alive, speaking to you over the 'Azad Hind' radio. British news agencies have spread all over the world the report that I had died in an aeroplane crash on my way to Tokyo to attend an important Conference there. Ever since I left India last year, British propaganda agencies

have from time to time given contradictory reports of my whereabouts, while newspapers in England have not hesitated to use uncomplimentary language about myself. The latest report about my death is perhaps an instance of wishful thinking. I can imagine that the British Government would, at this critical hour in India's history, like to see me dead since they are now trying their level best to win India over to their side for the purpose of their Imperialistic war." On the 25th of March, 1942 the whole world listened to this heartening announcement from the Azad Hind Radio (Germany). India was relieved to know from Subhas Chandra Bose's own lips that he was alive and safe and Indian patriots in the Far East who were going to meet in Tokyo in the end of March, 1942 to weld the various Indian National organisations in South East Asia into one unified organisation were equally hopeful that their efforts in the Pacific region would one day be integrated with the European Azad Hind movement fostered in Germany.

The Bangkok Conference

Subsequently, on the 15th of June these Indian patriots who were being swelled in number by the participation in their activities of Indian prisoners in Japanese hands,—Singapur having fallen on the 15th of February,—met at Bangkok and formed the Indian Independence League on the 24th of June under the presidentship of Shri Rashbehari Bose, Sri Debnath Das, Ananda Mohan Sahaya, N. Raghavan, Capt. Mohan Singh, Lt.-Col. Niranjan Singh Gill, Lt.-Col. Golam Zilani, K. P. K. Menon, attending.

The main aims and objects outlined by this League were : (1) that India should be considered as one indivisible whole and the activities of the League were to be on a national basis, and not sectional, communal or religious. The policy was the same as that so far being followed by the Indian National Congress , (2) and that an Indian National Army should be raised immediately from among the Indian forces—combatant and non-combatant. From Berlin Subhas Chandra Bose expressed his satisfaction at the formation of the League and after the initiation of Indian National Congress's "Quit India" movement appealed to other Indian parties including the Muslim League leader Mr. Jinnah and the Hindu Mahasabha leader Veer Savarkar and all other Nationalist Muslim leaders to fall in with the Congress line of action.

Indian Independence Day Celebration in Berlin

The first Independence Day Celebration was held at Berlin on the 26th of January, 1943. The Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, the Prime Minister of Iraq, Rashid Ali El Gilani and representatives of many other nations of Europe, Germans and Italians attended, Sj. Subhas Chandra Bose presided. Dressed in black Sherwani with Gandhi cap on, amongst thunderous applause and cheering, Sj. Bose dwelt on the policy of "divide and rule" as the fundamental basis of British rule from 1858 till to-day. In the Revolution of 1857 the Hindus and Muslims had fought side by side against the British and it was under the flag of Bahadur Shah a muslim that India's first war of Independence had been fought. The British realised that it was not enough to try to divide the Muslims from the rest of the population and they then set about trying to divide the Hindus themselves. In this way they discovered the caste problem in 1918, and suddenly became the champions and the liberators of the so-called 'Depressed classes'. Till the year 1937, Britain had hoped to keep India divided by posing as champions of the Princes, the Muslims and the so-called 'Depressed classes'. In the general election held under the new constitution of 1935, they found, however, to their great surprise that all their tricks and bluffs had failed, and that a strong national feeling permeated the whole nation and every section of it. Consequently, British policy has now fallen back on its last hope. If the Indian people cannot be divided, then the country—India—has to be split up, geographically and politically. This is the plan called 'Pakistan' which emanated from the fertile brain of a Britisher.

"After the war India needed a new weapon of struggle and at this psychological moment

Mahatma Gandhi came forward with his method of Satyagraha or passive resistance. During the last 22 years the Congress, under the Mahatma's leadership, has built up a powerful organization all over the country, including the States of the princes. It has awakened political life in the remotest village and among all sections of the people. Most important of all is the fact that the masses of India have learnt how to strike at a powerful enemy even without arms, and the Congress, under Mahatmaji's leadership, has demonstrated that it is possible to paralyse the administration with weapons of passive resistance."

IN TOKYO

The last time he spoke on the Azad Hind Radio was in April, 1943. No trace of his whereabouts was given to the world outside his own circle till he surprized the world by hailing his "countrymen and friends" from the Tokyo radio on the 21st of June, 1943. How he got there no one knew in this country at least till one of his comrades Capt. Abid Hossain revealed that he had journeyed to the Japanese capital from Germany in a German submarine guarded by five torpedo boats.

SOUTH EAST ASIA.

"Syonan" the renamed Japanese occupied port and naval base of Singapur where the Indian troops were stationed at the time were astonished to read an announcement in the English four page daily, "Syonan Shinbum," on June the 29th that "next month Subhas Chandra Bose will arrive at Syonan from Tokyo". Needless to say, that the news created a great commotion in Singapur. Many thought that some bogus person was being sought to be passed off as Subhas Chandra Bose. On the 2nd of July, the weather was exceedingly unfair and it was on such a day that Subhas Chandra Bose arrived at the Gelang Air Port in warm civilian clothes and Gandhi cap. He was taken to the residence of an Australin Jew—Mr. Meyer who fled to Australia at Katong on the northern outskirts of Singapur. From the very day of his landing there, he began to contact prominent Indians who had been so long only too eager to meet him.

On the 4th of July the Indian Independence League had a meeting in the Cathey Building, where a huge portrait of Mahatma Gandhi in his lion cloth and stick in hand was hung. Subhas Chandra Bose was unanimously elected President, on the proposal of Shri Rash Behari Bose, the first President. On the same day the Azad Hind Fauj or the Indian National Army was formed to fight for complete freedom from British rule in India and make India free that is, to make India for Indians, and its slogan was to be "Chalo Delhi". Addressing the Azad Hind Fauj at the military review in front of Singapur Town Hall on the 4th of July, Subhas Chandra Bose, since then addressed as Netaji Bose, said ; "Today is the proudest day of my life. To-day it has pleased Providence to give me the unique honour of announcing to the whole world that India's Army of Liberation has come into being. This army has now been drawn up in military formation on the battlefield of Singapur, which was once the bulwark of the British Empire. This is the Army that will emancipate India from British yoke. Every Indian must feel proud that this Indian Army has been organised entirely under Indian leadership, and that when the historic moment arrives, under Indian leadership it will go into battle. Standing today on the graveyard of the British Empire, even a child is convinced that the almighty British Empire, is already a thing of the past.

FORMATION OF AZAD HIND GOVERNMENT

21st October, 1943.

At the fourteen storied Cathey Building, renamed "*Dai-to-a-ge-ki-zi-o-i*", at Singapur the Provisional Government of Azad Hind was formed on the 21st October, 1943 with Headquarter at Syonan (Singapur). The proceeding began at 10 A. M. with the singing of an Urdu adaptation of 'Jana gana mana adhinayak' song of Rabindranath sung by a batch of Indians led by Capt. Ramsingh. This song was the national anthem of

the Azad Hind Government. Netaji Bose delivered inaugural speech and took the oath of allegiance in Hindusthani which was printed in Roman scripts as "Wafadari-Ka-Halaf" which was as follows :—

"In the name of God, I take this sacred oath that to liberate India and the thirtyeight crores of my countrymen I,..... will continue this sacred war of Freedom till the last breath of my life.

I shall always remain a servant of India and look after the welfare of thirty-eight crores of Indian brothers and sisters. This shall be for me my highest duty.

Even after winning freedom I will always be prepared to shed the last drop of my blood for the preservation of India's freedom."

The words of the oath moved him so much that after he had read half of it his voice was choked and tears began to roll down his cheek, the whole audience and the officers of the Azad Hind Government also sobbing in sympathy with him. One by one the Ministers of the Government and others took the oath of allegiance. The Ministers of the Government were :—

Netaji Bose, Head of State, Prime Minister, and concurrently Minister of War and Foreign Affairs.

Shri S. A. Iyer—Publicity.
Lt. Col. A. C. Chatterji—Finance.
Dr. S. Lakshmi—Women's organisation.
Shri A. M. Sahay—Secretary with Ministerial rank.
Shri Rash Behari Bose—Supreme Adviser.
Shri A. N. Sarkar—Legal Adviser.

A proclamation of the Provincial Government of Azad Hind was issued on the same day which concludes with the following appeal :—

"In the name of God, in the name of bygone generations who have welded the Indian people into one nation and in the name of the dead heroes who have bequeathed to us a tradition of heroism and self-sacrifice, we call upon the Indian people to rally round our banner and to strive for India's Freedom. We call upon them to launch the final struggle against the British and all their allies in India, and to prosecute the struggle with valour and perseverence and with full faith in final victory—until the enemy is expelled from the Indian soil and the Indian people are once again a free nation."

In addition to the ministers mentioned above, others from civilian and military officers, namely Lt. Col. Aziz Ahmed, Lt. Col. N. S. Bhagat, Lt. Col. J. K. Bhonsla, Lt. Col. Gulzara Singh, Lt. Col. M. Z. Kiani, Lt. Col. A. D. Loknathan, Lt. Col. Ehsan Qadir, Lt. Col. Shah Nawaz (Representative of the Armed Forces), Karim Ghani, Debnath Das, D. M. Khan, A. Yellapa, J. Thivy, S. Ishwar Singh (Representative of the Civilians) were appointed as advisers.

On the 25th August Netaji assumed direct command of the I. N. A. as the Supreme Commandar. He was then the Head of the State (Arzi Hukumat-e-Hind), President of the Azad Hind Sangh, Col. Bhonsle was appointed Chief of the General Staff. Col. Kiani was appointed as Commandant of the Gandhi Guerilla Regiment, Col. Bhagat, Commandant of Azad Guerilla Regiment and Col. Nagar as Commandant of Nehru Guerilla Regiment. Subhas Brigade was formed from amongst the selected volunteers of the existing regiments and Major General Shah Nawaz Khan was made its Commandant, with Col. Thakur Singh as Second in Command. Col. Raju was appointed as the personal physician of Netaji.

Rani of Jhansi Regiment

A death-defying regiment of brave ladies was formed known as the Rani of Jhansi Regiment on the 22nd of October 1943, with Dr. Lakshmi as Commanding Officer. Addressing the women, Netaji said :

"Sisters ! It will be no exaggeration to say that there is no sphere of activity, there is no department of National endeavour, in which Indian

women have not gladly and bravely shared along with our men the burden of our national struggle. Whether it is touring from village to village without food or drink, whether it is lecturing one meeting after another, whether it is carrying the Freedom-message from door to door, whether it is running election campaigns or whether it is leading processions along public streets in defiance of official orders, and inspite of lathi charges by the inhuman British police, or whether it is facing bravely imprisonment or prosecution, insult and humiliation, nowhere have our women been found wanting."

"If there is any one either here or elsewhere, who thinks that it is unworthy act to shoulder a rifle, I would ask her to turn to the pages of history ; what have our brave women done in the past ? What did the brave Rani of Jhansi do in the Revolution of 1857—India's First War of Independence ? It was this queen who with drawn sword, on horse-back,led her men to the battle. In the last and final War of Independence, we want not one Rani of Jhansi, but thousands and thousands of Ranis of Jhansi."

The heroic services of this regiment, specially of Lt. Miss Thevar, Dr Gayan Kaur, Lt. Lahanya Chatterji, Lt. Pratima Sen, Lt. Pratima Pant, Lt. Gauri Bhattacharjee, Havaldar Sipra Sen, Havaldar Reva Sen, N. C. O. Bella Dutt amongst many is too well known by now.

The Sacrifice of Malayan Indians

The Provisional Government had its own bank—The Azad Hind Bank opened in April, 1944 by Netaji at its head office at Rangoon, and with branches all over Burma. Shri A. Yallappa was its Governor and Shri S. A. Ayer Chairman of the Board of Directors. The bank issued its own currency and the amount to the credit of the I.N.A at the time of occupation of Rangoon by the British forces was 35 lacs. This was seized by the British.

When the history of Indian Independence is finally written Indians in Malaya will have a glorious place in it. The contribution of Indians in Malaya for India's struggle for freedom in men, money and material has been very great. Malaya contributed a large number of youngmen to the Azad Hind Fauj who fought and died bravely. Malaya made the largest contribution to the ranks of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment. Mr. Md. Habib, a powder merchant and a resident of Bombay donated one crore and two lacs of rupees. He himself joined the I. N. A. along with his wife. Netaji conferred on him the medal of "Sewak-e-Hind". Mr. and Mrs. H. R. Betai were the next to earn the medal of Sewak-e-Hind. Shri Parmanand handed over to the Provisional Government of Free India, his estate of 50 sq. miles, known as the Ziawadi Estate and a big cash donation. Mr. M. A. Ghani a merchant of South India in Malaya contributed more than a crore of rupees. Among the prominent names in the Roll of Honour may be mentioned : Swami Satynand Puri, Giani Pritam Singh, Capt. Mohammed Akram, Sri Nilkantha Iyer, and Sri A. Yallappa.

Azad Hind—the organ of the Indian Independence League Head-Quarters in East Asia was published from 161-163 Cecil Street, Syonan City, with Sri S. A. Ayer as the first editor and M. Sivaram as his successor. The first Broadcasting Station was started on the top of Cathey Building in July 1943 known as Shonan Radio and later an I. N. A. special Broadcasting Station was set up. There were other Stations run by the Arzi Hakumat. The best announcer of the I. N. A. Radio were Miss Anthony and Mrs. Bannerjee, Sj. Dasgupta, H. K. Nandy. Capt. Ram Singh was in charge of the Azad Hind Radio Orchestra.

On the 23rd of October the Council of Ministers presided over by Netaji declared war against Britain and the United States of America. The Azad Hind Government was recognised by nine States, including Germany, Italy, Japan, Manchukuo, Indo-China, Burma, Siam and Croatia. Japan gave a habitation to the Provisional Government in the shape of territories covered by the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, which were

formerly Indian territory and Lt. Col. A. D. Loknathan was appointed Chief Commissioner of these islands, renamed Shaheed and Swaraj Islands.

Netaji and Pakistan.

It will be recalled that at the time of the Cripps offer Netaji uttered warning against conceeding Pakistan. On October,15,1942 he spoke from Berlin that "British plans for post-war India have been made, and if British politicians were to have their own way, they would split up India into four or five States, under a strong Imperialist Government which would exploit the country more intensively than hitherto, in order to make up for their losses in this war. The Union Jack would then fly not only over the capital of India, as at present, but over the capitals of 'Hindustan', 'Pakistan', 'Rajasthan', 'Khalistan' and 'Pathanistan'. And, the Indian people would be given a British guarantee of permanent enslavement. Let Mr.M.A. Jinnah and his Muslim League ponder over this." About the formation of Muslim League Netaji said : "Since the beginning of this century, the British Government has been using another organisation as a counterblast to the Congress in order to reject its demands. She has been using the Muslim League for this purpose, because that party is regarded as Pro-British in its outlook. In fact, British propaganda has tried to create the impression that the Muslim League is almost as influential a body as the Congress, and that it represents the majority of India's Muslims. This, however, is far from the truth. British propaganda throughout the world gives the impression that the Indian Muslims are not behind the national struggle for liberty and want India to be divided up. The British themselves know that what they propagate is quite false, but they nevertheless hope that by repeating a falsehood again and again, they will be able to make the world believe it."

When Gandhi-Jinnah meeting was taking place in Bombay he on the 12th of September said : "We Indians in East Asia are to-day fighting for a free and United India. Friends, we have resolved to create a united and free India, therefore, we shall oppose all attempts to divide her and cut her up into bits. Ireland and Palestine have taught us a lesson. We have realized that to divide a country will ruin her economically, culturally and politically. America could not have risen to her present greatness had the American Pakistanists been allowed their own way. We can easily solve the minorities problem once we are free from foreign domination. We should have the Soviet Union as our example. There are more races in the Soviet Union than in India ; yet they are all united to-day. Why ? Because they are free and do not have to bow to a foreign ruler."

"Personally, I have great respect for Mr. Jinnah, President of the Muslim League. I and my party have been in close contact with him and have co-operated with the League in the past and I am opposed neither to the League nor to its illustrious leader. But I vehemently oppose the Pakistan scheme for the vivisection of our Motherland. I am sure that even if Pakistan is conceded, it will not solve our problem. The League will never fight the British as we do. All that it wants is the division of India into Hindu and Muslim States. There will be four Muslim States which will remain under British influence. So, instead of a single slave India, we shall have four independent slave Muslim States siding and abetting Britain. The British will ignore the Congress-League agreement if it is against their interest. They will not relinquish their hold on India. I ask the millions of Muslim youngmen in India—'Will you be a party to the vivisection of your Motherland ? What will your status be in a divided India ? Therefore, my friends, you must remember that if you want freedom you must fight for it and kick the British out. There should be no compromise with Britain. Our divine Motherland shall not be cut up."

It may be recalled that Netaji Bose was very explicit about his line of approach to the Pakistan scheme. Even from Bangkok in July, 1943 he gave his mind regarding Pakistan. Said Netaji, "I approached Mr. Jinnah for a settlement in 1940 but I came away disappointed. The Muslim

League is a Pro-British body and is supported mainly by 'yes-men' and traitors. That is why the Viceroy frequently calls Mr. Jinnah and consults him on important matters. It is the British who are the creators of the Muslim League, which is supported by the millionaires and landlords. Had the Congress and the Muslim League come to an understanding in 1940 at the time of collapse of France, and when British Morale was at its lowest, India would have been free by now. But, Mr. Jinnah insisted on the materialisation of Pakistan which is detrimental to the best interests of India, a demand which hampered our progress towards freedom. The British have long been carrying out a 'divide and rule' policy in India. To further weaken our solidarity the British have engineered the Muslim League demand of Pakistan, which aims at vivisecting India. I can confidently assert that the Hindu-Muslim question is a British creation. This is proved by the fact that though the Indian National Army is mainly composed of Muslim soldiers, there is perfect harmony between them and their Hindu comrades. Netaji Bose went on to say that the Provisional Government of Free India will shortly take shape and continue functioning until it attains its goal of driving out the British from India. When India is free this Government will be dissolved and a new one will then be constituted by the Indian people. "I believe," went on Netaji "that Mr. Jinnah is doing great harm to the National cause by advocating Pakistan. He is misleading simple-minded Muslims by lending charm to Pakistan and playing upon their religious fanaticism. We all know that India will be plunged into a welter of chaos and confusion if the Pakistan Scheme comes to fruition. The Muslims fail to realise that the British are the enemies of the Muslims and Islam, and their policy has always been directed against them. It was the British who brought about the down-fall of the Moghals and enslaved India. Will the British ever liberate India? We think not, they will perpetuate their hold on us and keep us in bondage."

Concluding his broad-cast on the 18th August, 1944 Netaji said "The Pakistan plan is something which no Indian nationalist will approve or countenance, whatever his religion or caste. No matter what the compromise-mongers and Pakistanis may say, the Indian National Army will march onward to its goal fully confident that the vast majority of Indian people at home will welcome it with open arms."

Netaji and Mahatmaji

While paying a traibute to the memory of Sm, Kasturibai Gandhi who died in the Poona prison Netaji said "I pay humble tribute to the memory of that great lady who was a mother to the Indian people, and I wish to express may deepest sympathy for Gandhiji in his bereavement. I had the privilege of coming into frequent personal contact with Shrimati Kasturba and I would sum up my tribute to her in a few words. She was the ideal of Indian womanhood, strong, patient, silent, self-sufficient. Kasturba was a source of inspiration to the millions of India's daughters among whom she moved and whom she met in the struggle for the freedom of her motherland. From the days of the South-African Satyagraha she has shared with her great husband the trials and sufferings which have been their lot for nearly 30 years now. Her many imprisonments seriously impaired her health but jails held no terrors for her even in her 74th year. Any time Mahatma Gandhi laudched a civil dis-obedience movement, Kasturba was at his side in the forefront of the struggle, an outstanding example to India's daughters and a challenge to the sons of India not to lag behind their sisters in the fight for India's independence. Kasturba has died a Martyr's death."

In a message to Mahatmaji which Netaji broad-casted over Rangoon radio on July 7, 1944 he said "After having served my people so long to the best of my ability, I could have no desire to be a traitor or to give anyone any justification for calling me a traitor. By going abroad on the perilous quest, I was risking not only my life and my whole future career, but what was more, the future of my party. If I had the slightest hope that without action from abroad we could win freedom, I would never have left India during the crisis. If I had any hope that within our life time,

we would get another chance—another golden opportunity for winning freedom as during the present war, I doubt if I would have ever set out from home."

On the occasion of the 75th Birth-day ceremony of Mahatma Gandhi, Netaji said "The service which Mahatma Gandhi has rendered to India and to the cause of India's freedom is so unique and unparalleled that his name will be written in letters of gold in our national history for all time to come. Constitutional agitation, boycott of British goods, armed revolution, all alike failed to bring freedom. There was not a ray of hope left, and the Indian people were groping in the dark for a new method and a new weapon of struggle. Just at this psychological moment, Gandhiji appeared on the scene with his novel method of Non-Co-operation or Satyagraha or Civil Disobedience. It appears as if he had been sent by Providence to show us the path to liberty. Immediately and spontaneously the whole nation rallied under his banner. India had found a new Messiah. Every Indian's face was lit with a new light and a new hope and a renewed confidence. Victory did not seem as impossible as it had appeared before. For twenty years and more Mahatma Gandhi has worked for India's salvation and with him the Indian people have worked. It is no exaggeration to say that if in 1920 he had not come forward with his new weapon of struggle, India to-day would perhaps have still been prostrate. His services to the cause of India's freedom are unique and unparalleled. No single man could have achieved more in a lifetime under similar circumstances. Since 1920 the Indian people have learnt two things from Mahatma Gandhi, which are indisputable preconditions of Independence. They have learnt national self respect and self confidence as a result of which, revolutionary fervour is now blazing in their hearts. They have got a country-wide organisation which extends even to the remotest hamlet of India. Mahatma Gandhi has firmly planted our feet on the straight road to liberty. At the annual session of the Indian National Congress at Nagpur in December 1920, he said, 'If India had the sword to-day she would have drawn the sword'. And proceeding further Mahatmaji said that since armed revolution was out of the question, the only other alternative before the country was that of Non-Co-operation or Satyagraha. Since then times have changed and it is now possible for the Indian people to draw the sword. We are happy and proud that India's Army of Liberation has already come into existence, and is steadily increasing in numbers".

The War of Independence

The Indian War of Independence was launched in the Arakan region on the 4th of February, 1944. Events followed one another in quick succession on the Burma front. The Azad Hind Fauj marched up to the Manipur-Assam front and succeeded in penetrating into British territory up to Kohima. The war was carried to another sector of the Indo-Burmese frontier—the Tiddim sector—almost a month later, and one week thereafter a general offensive began in the direction of Manipur and Assam, and very soon the Indian frontier was crossed at a number of points. Units of the Azad Hind Fauj, side by side with units of the Imperial Japanese Army, marched into Manipur and Assam. Since then, fighting had been going on inside the frontier of India. Indian contingents had also been fighting in the Kaladan and Haka sectors. The weather became so highly inclement that the army had to retreat from within the gates of India and all its aspirations of marching up to Delhi and capturing the Red Fort were shattered by adversity of circumstances. Rangoon was surrendered to the British forces on May 3, 1945 and the Azad Hind Fauj had fallen back upon Bangkok on the 24th April, 1945 and its Government functioned from there till the date of final surrender in August, 1945.

Sri A. N. Sarkar was the Mininter in charge at Bangkok. Sri Debnath Das conveying the Rani of Jhansi regiment to Bangkok and while they were near Moulmain, fire was opened on them by the Burma Defence Auxiliary force. On April 24, 1945 the Headquarters of the Azad Hind Government was shifted from Rangoon to Bangkok. Netaji arrived at Bangkok crossing the river



Ba



Mridula Sarabhai

Her selfless social and political work extends from non-co-operation era up-to-date, in various fields of activity.



Second Session of the United Nations General Assembly opens at Flushing Meadows

Mrs. Pandit, the only woman to head a delegation to the United Nations and her daughters. Left to right, Tara, Lekha and Rita, Brigadier General C. P. Romulo and Mrs. Romulo.

Photo
U. N. Information Department



Acharya Kripalani
The Rashtrapati when India attained Independence.



Sri G. V. Mavlankar
Speaker of Indian Parliament.



Mrs. Vijaylakshmi Pandit
India's Ambassador in U. S. S. R.



Sri Asaf Ali
India's Ambassador in U. S. A.

Meenam by motor boat. He arrived there in an unkempt and unshaven appearance through intense bombing by British Air Force. Sri. A. N. Sarkar, Revenue Minister and Sri Gurubux Sing received him and took him to Hotel Nampo in Bangkok. Lt.-Gen. Jashoda was the Kikan (Liaison Officer) there at the time. The next Japanese officer was Col. Kagawa.

On the 13th August, he went to Shonan from the Galang Air port. He put up at the Meyers House at Singapur. One of his teeth was extracted there. He was accompained by his A. D. C. Capt. Samsher Singh. On the 14th August, he sent for Sri A. N. Sarkar, his Revenue Minister who in the meantime had come to the I. N. A. guest house at Mount Pleasant Road, Sri Sarkar insisted on his departure from Singapur at once. He said that he wanted to die fighting with the remnants of his fighting squad at Singapur. Sri Sarkar did not agree and proved adamantine in offering this advice. Sri Sarkar then implored him to call a meeting of the Cabinet and to abide by its decision. If he was not agreeable to do so, he must discharge his present cabinet and call a fresh Council of Ministers in its place. Netaji looked far into the sea with a distant gaze and seemed to collect himself within him and then said—"very well, let that be so".

Last Cabinet Meeting of Azad Hind Government

The very last Cabinet meeting of the Azad Hind Government was held on the evening of the 15th August, 1945. Netaji presided and the following members were present:—

A. N. Sarkar, Minister of Revenue.
Major Gen. Alagappan, Minister of Supply.
S. A. Aiyar, Minister of Publicity and Propaganda.
Major-Gen. Bhonsle, Chief of Staff.
Major General Kiyani Divisional Commander, the Minister without Portfolio.
Lt. Col. Habibur Rahaman, Deputy-Chief of Staff.

Sri Sarkar proposed that Netaji should now leave Singapur immediately. It was unanimously carried. Netaji kept silent. Tears started to his eyes. He consented to abide by the decision of the Cabinet. Sri Sarkar at once rang up Kikan Ishodo to arrange for a special plane. Lt. Col. Murata came in after a while and said—"Mujukasi Desu" (it is difficult). Mr. Sarkar firmly called upon him to arrange a plane, any class available, by any means. He said he could arrange a bomber only. Sri Sarkar looked at Netaji—He said he did not mind. Sarkar then asked for arranging that bomber. It was about 11 at night. The Ministers stood up and took leave of him in a solemn silence after uttering "Jai Hind". "Jai Hind" said Netaji passionately.

The plane was to leave at 5. A. M. The ministers were again foregathered between 3 and 4 o'clock. Netaji's A. D. C. Capt. Samsher Singh received the Ministers. Netaji came in and asked them to wait a while till he took his bath. After some time he came dressed as the Supreme Commander and after handing over the last two Orders of the Day to Sri Sarkar asked whether he approved of them. Sarkar went through the Orders and handed them back to Netaji. Thereafter Netaji was closeted with him for about half an hour. Finally Netaji handed over his personal effects to Sarkar, with the request that they might be given to his poor countrymen.

The party proceeded to Gallang Air Port in four cars. Netaji was entertained to tea at the Air Port by the military officers.

There was only one *durree* spread in the Bomber. Sri S. A. Aiyer and Col. Habibur Rahaman also got into the same plane and Capt. Pritam Singh, the most trusted and devoted lieutenant among the I. N. A. officers. Sri Sarkar had written an English sonnet of farewell and he presented this with a National Flag to Netaji. The plane took off, but after proceeding some distance, it came back. There was some engine trouble. Netaji morosely remarked with a faint smile: "I am listening to the advice of my Ministers but the plane would not." After

8 P. M. the plane finally started. It was the 2nd of June at the Gallang Air Port that he was last seen, and nobody knows definitely what was his destination and where he is now. The same mystery that hung around his disappearance from Calcutta hangs around him still.

"THE SOLEMN HEIGHTS TO THE STARS ARE KNOWN"

Meanwhile gazing on his pictures, which are hung in almost every house, his grateful countrymen are waiting for the day when India's immortal leader will redeem his promise.

"Meanwhile, I may assure that my pledge given to my own people shall be redeemed in the fullness of time. As sure as day follows night, I will live to participate in the final struggle for our Liberty, not from abroad, but at home, side by side with comrades who have been bravely carrying on the fight, while I have been away on duty."

"Inqilab Zindabad ! Azad Hind Zindabad !"

ABHINAV BHARAT TO I. N. A.

SRI G. V. DAMLE

This revolutionary Society was founded in 1901 A. D. at Nasik by Veer Savarkar. It spread like wild fire in Maharastra. Numerous Congress leaders of today, owe their first inspiration towards Independence to their initiation into this Revolutionary organization of Abhinav Bharat. Acharya Kripalani the erstwhile president of the Congress and Shriyut Kher the present prime-minister of Bombay, Bar. Asaf Alli, Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan and several others for example accepted the secret pledge and joined this secret society in college days during this period from 1901 to 1909. When Veer Savarkar went to England he organized the all India Centre of this society in London. Pandit Shyamji Madame Cama, Lala Hardayal, Madanlal Dhingra, the Pillay brothers, Veerendranath Charopadyaya, V. V. S. Aiyer and hundreds of other patriots who were initiated in to this Revolutionary organization carried on their revolutionary activities with such a zeal and heroic courage that the British Government was seriously perturbed and launched a vigorous repressive campaign against them Revolutionary Organization simultaniously both in India and England. It was Abhinav Bharat which for the first time unfurled the standard of Indian Revolt in England and made the world aware of the Indian demand of absolute political Independence. Madame Cama was invited and sent on behalf of the Abhinav Bharat revolutionary society to represent India at a European socialist conference in Germany where she unfurled for the first time amidst enthusiastic scenes, the first provisional Flag of independent India. L. Hardayal a prominent leader of the Abhinav Bharat went to America and started a revolutionary branch there which later on became famous as the 'Gadhar revolutionary party'. Just then first world War broke out and there upon all the leaders of Abhinav Bharat—Chattopadya the Pillay Brothers, Lala Hardyal etc. etc. joined the German Government, and tried with the help of Germany in arms and military officers to invade India. The Comagata maru affair the Emden bombardment: the several mutinies in the Indian troops at Hongkong, Singapore, Burma, the rising in Punjab, Lahore and other conspiracy cases were all off-shoots in this campaign of an armed revolutionary rising against England during the years of the Great German War 1914 to 1918.

These efforts to invade India with organised military Indian forces from outside in the days of the first world War, in which so many leaders and followers, of the Abhinav Bharat revolutionary society took such a prominent part constituted infact an actual rehearsal of and served as an example, incentive and guide to the latest effort on a larger and mightier scale, to invade India by the I. N. A. under Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in the last world war in 1942 to 44.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE PEASANTS AND WORKERS MOVEMENT

Sri M. P. Sinha

President Bihar Provincial Congress Committee

THE people in India is another name for the kisans, for 87 percent of the population get their living by work in agriculture. The number of industrial workers is very small. These conditions and the influence of Gandhiji have determined the Congress policy and programme about labour movement. For one thing the emphasis that is given in the west and by the Marxian parties to the proletariat is missing and much more importance is given to the village worker. For another, class war is not accepted or encouraged as the basis of such a movement.

In its new phase, it has been the endeavour of the Congress to become a truly mass or kisan movement. Gandhiji's early combats were fought on direct agrarian issues. Later the whole programme and the long term goal of the Congress have been formulated for the uplift of the Kisans. The first place given to the constructive programme was to benefit the villages and also to remove the gulf between the workers drawn mostly from the, bourgeois class and the tillers of the soil. The Congress ministries, in their brief regime had tried to carry out measures of agararian nature, debt redemption, reform of land tenures and better social services for the village. The Congress stood committed to abolish landlordism, reduce such taxation as affected the villages specially and to inaugerate schemes of health, education, prohibiton, cottage industry, agricltural iurovement and civic amenities in the village.

The strength of the Congress lay in the support it received from the kisans. Theirs' was the sanction behind the Satyagraha movements of filling the jails, of boycott, of costructive activity and in the election campaigns.

Separate organisations were later formed for the kisans. The terrible burden of landords, money-lenders and the Government that the peasant had to bear called for a different tempo from the slower pace of political progress by negotiations. The fervent in the countryside in U.P. and elsewhere during non-co-operation was more agrarian than political. The crisis towards which the Congress was working was no-tax campaign in the villages. But it was much later, in 1936, that the All-India Kisan Sabha was formed. In its first Conference at Faizpur, held along with the Congress session, 20,000 peasants took part, many having marched hundreds of miles to attend. The Faizpur Congress adopted an agrarian programme and the political solidarity of the two organisations was declared. The formation of the Congress Ministries in 1937 proved a powerful stimulus to Kisan Sabha. In Bihar and U.P., the kisans staged gigantic peasant marches and demonstrations and a raging and tearing propaganda was organised. Though sometimes it embarassed the Ministries, it did exert a powerful counter-influence as against the landlords and helped in quickening the pace of agrarian reform. The Congress at Haripura in 1938 had to pass a resolution taking note of these developments and defining its attitude towards separate peasant organisations. This resolution, while fully recognising the right of the kisans to organise kisan Sabhas, pointed out that the Congress itself is in the main a kisan organisation and as contact with the masses has increased vast numbers of kisans have joined it and influenced its policy. To achieve independence and freedom from exploitation and strength for the kisans, the Congress organisation must be strengthened by more and more kisans joining it. It however fell it necessary to warn Congressmen against

creating an atmosphere hostile to the Congress principles and policy as members of kisan Sabhas.

The fourth All-India Kisan Sabha, held in Gaya in 1939 revealed a membership of 800,000. This Conference passed a resolution that expressed the new orientation of the movement: "...the peasant Organisation affirms that the time has come when the united forces of the country, embracing the Congress, the States people, peasants, workers and the organisations and people generally, should take a forward step and launch an attack on the slave constitution of the imperialist domination itself for complete national independence and a democratic State of the Indian people, leading ultimately to the realisation of a Kisan Mazdoor Raj."

Within a few months of the Gaya session, came the opening of the war. A wave of repression was let loose on the Indian people. The Kisan leaders were the first to be arrested. All over the country the peasants put up a determined fight. In the Punjab over 5000 kisans, including hundreds of women were jailed for mass demonstrations demanding reduction in land revenue. In Bihar, Andhra, Bengal, C. P., U. P., Malabar, Sind and Assam, Kisans put up a valient struggle. Later, in 1942, the story of their spontaneous rising against the Government action in the arrest of the Congress leaders has been told elsewhere. During war years they suffered terribly on account of maladministration, corruption and black market resulting in famine. The kisan organisations did valuable work, against overwhelming odds in fighting the famine.

The work of the Kisan Sabhas, no doubt helped in hastening the major agrarian reforms which the Congress had in view and in strengthening the hands of the ministries to abolish the zamindari system later.

The Labour Movement.

The industrial labour stood on a different footing. Numerically this class is small. But it is concentrated in important centres and is more conscious, organised and militant. Also it had a world pattern to work upon for its organisation, objectives and programme. It was, directly and indirectly linked with the labour movements in other modern countries, and had the colossal inspiration of the Soviet Russia to move and guide it.

The number of the industrial workers in India in modern factory scale industry, including Mines, Railways, Water transport and the Plantations is estimated at over 5 million.

The condition of the working class has been appaling in the low wages, abominable, crowded dwelling places, in social conditions and legal protection, by labour legislation: and reform so far moved at a snail's pace.

The Labour movement in India, like all awakening has shown an advance parallel to the militant national movement. We know of the first general strike in India by the Bombay Labour against the six-years sentence on Lokmanya Tilak. In the period of awakening at the close of the first World War, a great strike wave came from 1918 to 1921 along with the non-co-operation movement. A decade later the working class was an organised force and in 1928, when a Youth movement and other revolutionary upsurge was riding a crest, a great strike movement also came into evidence. But the movement now was coming under other than Congress influnce and partly followed an independent and separate course.

Labour Organisations

The Indian Trade Union Congress was founded in 1920 and Lala Lajpat Rai was its first President. The fourth session in 1924 was presided over by Deshbandhu Das. In the same year the Cawnpore Trial was staged by the Government against four communist leaders, Dange, Shaukat Usmani, Muzaffar Ahmed and Das Gupta and they were heavily sentenced. But the socialist ideas were spreading widely now. The 1927 session at Delhi had been attended by British Cummunist M. P. Saklatvala. A militant marxist leadership was coming into evidence, and the organisation and its activity shot up in the subsequent years. As in the Congress the new

leadership and outlook was replacing the reformist ledership. In 1929, the Meerut Trial was held and gave great publicity to the marxist doctrines in India. At Nagpur in 1929, the inevitable split occured. The old leaders like Mr. N. M. Joshi, Shiva Rao, Giri and Dewan Chaman Lal, disagreeing with the new majority formed the National Trade Union Federation. A further split took place in the parent body and the Communist section formed the Red Trade Union Congress and the All-India Trade Union Congress came together in 1935. In 1938, the National Federation of Trade Unions again joined the A. I. Trade Union Congress. The unity in this central Trade Union organisation continued inspite of varying idealogies of communitst and other groups till 1941, when Mr. M. N, Roy and his adherents established the so-called "Indian Federation of Labour". It was subsidised by the Government with a monthly grant of Rs 13,000, but failed to cut any ice with the working class, inspit of intense propaganda.

The Congress Socialist party formed in 1934 was busy mostly with the Kisan Sabhas. The Congress had developed its own policy, specially after the coming of the Labour movement under communist influence. Gandhiji had organised a Textile Labour Association that remained outside the trade union organisation and warked on the basis of class-peace rather than war.

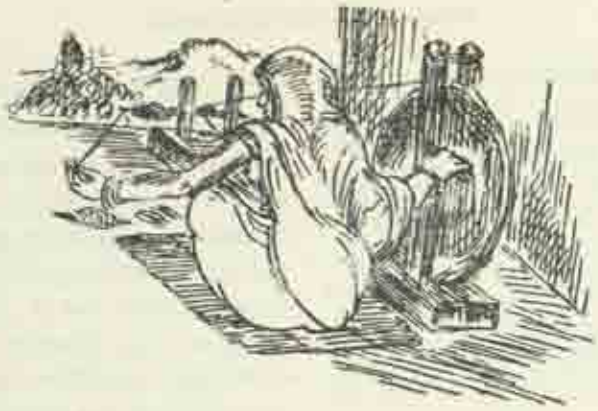
Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangha

This organisation was set up in 1937 by the Gandhi Seva Sangha to organise labour on the principles set up by Mahatma Gandhi. The purpose was ".....To establish just indnstrial relations, eradicate exploitation in any form, securing speedy improvement of the condition of work and life and the status in industry and society of the labourer. The work was to be based on truth and non-violence. It was to be only an advisory body of experts and its member Unions were free to form relations with the Trade Union Congress. The Congress Working Committee in 1946 adpoted the Sangha policy, tradition and machinery. In 1947, the Sangha was organised and took up an active programme.

The Congress does not treat the Labour as a 'class', but only as a part of the whole community. Not class war, but united and just social order is its ideal. It recognises the clash of interest of Labour and Capital on particular issues and is not against separate Labour organisation or strikes for the grievances, but is against political strikes or violence. Its program includes nationalalisation of mineral resources, transport, principle methods of production and distribution in land and industries and other departments of national life. It is strongly opposed to concentration of wealth and power in the hands of individuals and groups.

There is a charge made sometimes, that the Congress is under capitalist influence. This is not true, in fact the Capitalist knows that the Congress stands for the toiling masses. This is what Nehru says about it in his 'Discovery of India'. "A few industrialist have financially helped from time to time the social reform activities of the Congress such as village industries, abolition of untouchability and raising of depressed classes, basic education, etc. But they have kept scruplously aloof from the political work of the Congress, even in normal times, and much more so during the period of conflict with Government. Whatever their individual sympathies they believe, like most sober and well-established individuals in safety first. Congress work has been carried on almost entirely on petty subscriptions and donations of its large membership. Most of that work has been voluntary and unpaid."

The Capitalist fear of the Congress is clear also from the results of elections. In 1937 there were 93 seats in all Provincial Assemblies to represent Capital interests, 37 for Landlords and 56 for Commerce and Industry. The Congress could secure only 7 seats or 7.5% out of the total. In 1946, however the Congress got 28 seats. In the Labour seats, in 1937, the Congress secured 18 out of the total of all provinces, the greatest number held by any single party. In 1946, the Congress again topped the list with over 66% of the total labour seats. While the Congress secured 23 seats, Communist Party got 7 and Radical Democratic Party 1.



CHAPTER XXXII

THE PART OF WOMEN

IN the struggle for Indian Freedom the women of India have played a glorious part. In every revolution and struggle, indirectly it is the women who bear the brunt of anguish and suffering due to death and devastation. This share of burden of tears and toils of these long years of struggle was borne by the wives, mothers, and daughters silently and cheerfully. The programme of self-imposed poverty and periodical jail going was possible only because of the willing co-operation of the worker's family. In the various resistance movement in the villages, the illiterate women played this passive but contributory part as comrades of their menfolk.

This part was in accordance with the highest tradition of Indian women. This stead-fast loyalty and silent sacrifice has been the prevailing character of Indian womanhood in times of crisis and ordinary times, in all stations of life. Take the instance of Kasturba, the life companion of India's greatest warrior. How this quiet self-effacing little lady underwent countless trials as Gandhiji's wife, how gallantly she agreed to the Mahatma's endless experiments and self-imposed life of poverty and suffering. Take Swarup Rani Nehru who cheerfully gave her husband and children to the country's cause and herself old and frail entered the fray at its thickest ; Kamala, Jawaharlal's brave wife, how she kept smiling all through the long years of travail of her brief life ; the wives and mothers of countless, known and unknown, volunteers and revolutionaries who chose the path of gallows and jail, preferring it to life of comfort, and personal ambition.

The satayagraha movement also brought the women out from its silent and noble part in the home to the dust and din of political struggle. They ventured into the midst of crowds, they stood on duty in rain and sun before wine shops and cloth shops, braving indignities, lathi charge and the life in jails. They showed a high moral courage to break free from the trammels of custom and prejudice and a physical courage which their frail bodies did not measure. There were tradition in India of such women also, not only of Sita and Draupadi, but of Chandbibi, Padmini, the dauntless Rani of Jhansi and Ahalya Bai Holker. In the movement and leadership of Gandhiji, Indian women had heard a familiar echo. The awakening among women in 1930 was phenomenal. They came forward all over the land, in the most conservative provinces and families. They included highly educated and cultured women and the simple ignorant village women, without barrier of caste and creed. The kinship among the women moved by a common urge was in fact much more marked than among men who found it hard to forget social or other differences. Perhaps the fervour and glow of idealism, the loyalty of woman to a cause, is more exalted than that of a man.

This hightide of fervour, no doubt, incidentally raised the status of Indian women. Purdah

and seclusion of woman and her backward and conservative environment were largely reduced and a new level and conscious effort for a higher level continued, even after the tide had ebbed out. Many outstanding personalities among women came up to work in various spheres of social progress along with the political struggle.

These names are now too numerous to record. The first among the glorious list is Annie Besant, who, though Irish by birth, had made India her home. Bernard Shaw had called her 'the greatest woman in the world', W. T. Stead had wrote she was 'the greatest orator of the world', Lord Haldane had estimated her as 'the greatest Statesman of our times'.

Sarojini Naidu might come as the first name among India's enlightened women. Great as a poet and orator she has not hesitated to 'raid' a salt depot and march to jail. She has shown equal brilliance in her social salon as centre of the Bombay elite, in swaying an international gathering and as Governor of a province. She and these other women began as comely girls in the service of the country and steadfastly carried the struggle till they are grown grey. There is Kamala Chattopadhyaya, artist, writer, politician and socialist who used to be a recruiting officer with Sophia Somji (now Khan), there is Hansa Mehta, the lady who presented the Constituent Assembly with India's National Flag, Leelavati the talented wife of Mr. Munshi. Among the charming girls of the twenties ripening into high dignitaries, the most spectacular is perhaps Vijaylaksami Pandit, who made a conquest at the U.N.O. by her tact and eloquence which was not possible for mere men, and who was a successful minister and is now the Ambassador in U.S.S.R., a position the equal of which perhaps no woman in the world has held so far. Her sister Krishna, Indira Jawaharlal's daughter and other girls of Nehru family have played a less spectacular but very effective part in the country's regeneration.

There have been fire brands and revolutionary fighters among our girls, of which Aruna Asaf Ali has, in recent years, become the most famous, as the dauntless organiser of and spirit behind the 1942 movement. There are the Bengali girls who shot at Governors and District Magistrates and took active part in daring deeds like the Chittagong Armoury raid. Lakshmi of the I. N. A. belongs to this class.

But most of the daring and endurance shown by our women is of the type of Sucheta Kripalani, Prabhavati, Dr. Sushila Nair and others. Prabhavati, the Gandhian wife of the socialist leader Jai Prakash has filled up the duty of a daughter to Gandhi and of a wife to her revolutionary husband simultaneously, with complete self-effacement, sacrifice and fearlessness. For self-effacement, and fearlessness steadfastness we have to look at Sushila Nair. Her and Sucheta's work in the midst of the dangers of a riot effected area is an envy of the 'stronger' sex. The most remarkable instance of self-effacement and steadfastness in the Gandhian family is perhaps that of Mira Ben, the daughter of an English Admiral, but now more Indian than anybody born and brought up in an Indian village. Another remarkable name from this family is that of Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, equally at home in Sevagram and the Cabinet of Indian ministers, born and brought up as a princess, chosing to live in Sevagram. The Sardar's daughter and secretary Maniben also comes of the Gandhian family, and with all its characteristics.

There is remarkable ability for organisation shown by some of our women. Sucheta has been in charge of women's section in the Congress and of the Kasturba memorial work. Another remarkable lady, the daughter of a millionaire, who has dedicated whole life to the national cause is Mridula Sarabhai. She has held the office of the General Secretary of the Congress with distinction and has done invaluable service elsewhere. The latest addition to India's eminent and indefatigable social workers is that of Lady Mountbatten.

Generations have passed in this struggle, a struggle of toil and tears that lie behind the achievement of our day. Many a woman have lived in death, many have laid down their lives inch by inch for the cause of the motherland in anguish, hope and faith. Satyavati of Delhi,

a grand daughter of Swami Shradhananda was such, with her spirit unbroken by a long and cruel imprisonment and by the shadow of death, a fighter to the last breath.

The women of India have thus fought their part in a glorious manner in our political struggle. But this is not all their contribution. They have played an equally glorious part in the regeneration that has conditioned and helped this freedom fight. There have been women pioneers in all spheres of life, in social reform, as constructive social workers, as great teachers and organisers of institutions, as writers, poets, artists, musicians, journalists and doctors.

For their own progress—which is another name for the social progress of the whole people—they have fought through the All-India Women's Conference. They have been pioneers in India's struggle against time-worn usages and customs. With this they have remained to be the custodians of India's ancient culture and tradition. They have carried their noble work on a higher plane than men, transcending communal barriers and racial prejudice. The work of women goes much deeper in the recovery of India and the hope lies much more in their work than is generally realised.

All-India Women's Conference.

The All-India Women's Conference, the most prominent of women's organisation was organised by Mrs. Margaret E. Cousins.

The first All-India Women's Conference was organized at Poona in December, 1926, and since then it has been an annual feature.

Though the Conference at first began to concentrate its energy on educational reform, it widened its scope in social advancement, promotion of national unity. It has created agitation on (1) widening of women's franchise ; (2) removal of untouchability ; (3) communal unity ; (4) promotion of child welfare; (5) protection of women and children employed in industry ; (6) special measures dealing with immoral traffic ; and (7) codification of laws for improvement of Hindu women's status, etc. Its outstanding work was the starting of Lady Irwin College of Home Science in New Delhi.

Communal unity is another kindred problem which has engaged its attention. The Women's Conference have done a great service to the nation in bringing women of all communities on a common platform irrespective of caste, colour or creed.

The other women's organisations are : (1) Women's Indian Association started in 1917 at Madras by Dr. Annie Besant. It is the first women's organisation of India and did pioneer work in many spheres. (2) National Council of Women founded in 1925. It has now five Provincial Councils in Delhi, Bombay, Bihar, Central Provinces and Bengal. There are also numerous women's organisations throughout India for advancement of women's cause.





Dr. Khan Sahab



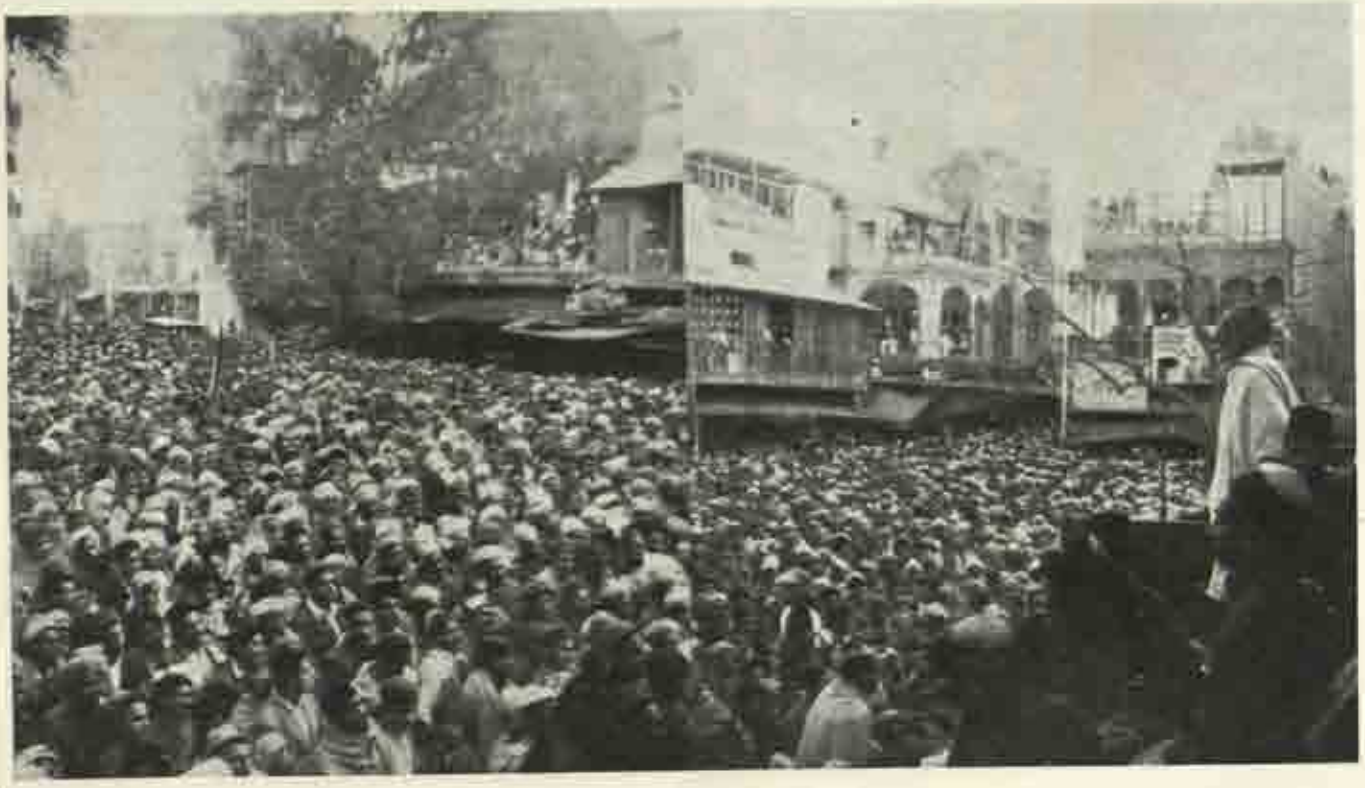
Khan Abdul Samad Khan,
popular leader of Baluchistan



Khan Bahadur Alla Bux, premier of Sindh and president of Azad Muslim Conference is taken out in a procession.



The fateful meeting of Leaguers that declared Direct Action with Mr Suhrawardy as the central figure



Badshah Khan addresses a meeting at Peshawar

BOOK VIII

INDIA IS DIVIDED : INDIA IS FREE



CHAPTER XXXIII

GENESIS OF THE COMMUNAL PROBLEM

"This has been a very eventful day; as some one said to me 'An epoch in Indian history'."

This evening I have received the following letter from an official: "I must send Your Excellency a line to say that a very very big thing happened today. A work of statesmanship that will affect India and Indian history for many a long year. It is nothing less than the pulling back of 62 millions of people from joining the ranks of seditious opposition."

(*Lady Minto's Journal*, October 1, 1906)

THAT is how the wife of the Indian Viceroy records, rather indiscretly perhaps, the date of birth of communal electorates when the first "seed was sown which grew into a tree with deep roots and wide spread branches, to the great detriment of India and the lasting benefit of Britain, which long succeeded in thus blocking the way to Indian Independence". (Rajendra Prasad).

It is not quite clear whether it was Mr. Archbold the principal of Aligarh College or Lord Minto who thought of this scheme. But it was a great invention, far reaching in its deadly effect, like the invention of gun-powder, for instance.

It would seem dire necessity had given birth to it. The 'safety valve' of the Congress had grown into a monster child and had become a menace by 1906. Earlier, Lord Curzon had used another device, now familiar to us of territorial partition to reduce the rather uncomfortable resurgent nationalism of an area, but had met with failure. The first embryo form of Pakistan, even though still-born, is thus held to our view, in the words of Statesman. The object of the Bengal Partition was 'To foster in Eastern Bengal the growth of a Mohammadan power, which it is hoped, will have the effect of keeping in check the rapidly growing strength of the Hindu community.'

There was a time when Indian scholars, Hindus and Muslims, went into long history and eloquent argument to dissuade the League from its pursuit of Pakistan. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, thus spent a

valuable, long jail-term to write a monumental book on this theme. Such work has not become obsolete, although the folly and tragedy is accomplished and is today lit large on blood-soaked and the darkest page in the long history of our country. Not only our country stands dismembered, but the national unity lies shattered, putting a limit upon and seriously threatening our hard won freedom. A realisation, however, seems to be coming to the erstwhile supporters of 'two nations' and Pakistan, and it is useful to recount the development of the communal problem to help this realisation.

Revivalism

Even more consequential than this, is the need to save our country from the reaction of Pakistan in the form of a communal revivalism, of taking our inspiration from fossilised ideologies, splendours of a ruin of a Somnath and of dreaming narrow parochial dreams while great plans of economic and social building await us and our long suffering people search for the signs of Swaraj. This is the worst danger of Pakistan.

"We need Hindu-Muslim unity, because the lack of it hurts our religion, degrades our humanity, narrows down our intellect, retards the growth of our knowledge, infects our mind with superstitions. We want unity because we want to grow."—*Tagore*.

Let us remember that though the communal problem in India is overwhelmingly a British creation, this very revivalism has played its part. The most militant part of our nationalism, at the time when the Separate Electorates were introduced, was deriving its inspiration from the Hindu scriptures and Hindu heroes as Shivaji, Pratap and Govind Singh. This kept away the Muslims and they in their turn looked back to early muslim history, beyond Indian borders. The assimilation of the two people that had no doubt begun in the middle ages was not a completed process. The State functioned either in a negative way or encouraged a stagnant social order of illiteracy, poverty and backwardness. History was interpretted with the object of creating communal animosity. Worn out customs were preserved. The political device thus found a fertile soil.

"As it was revivalism and separate electorates supplement each other and favoured a cultural and political milieu on separatist basis. The consequences unfolded themselves with the remorseless march of a Greek Tragedy. The years that followed the Reforms found a Hindu meeting at Allahabad resolving to establish an All-India Hindu Sabha. There began the habit of regarding the Hindus and Muslmans as separate political entities". (Beni Prasad: Hindu Muslim Questions).

Non-co-operation and Unity

With the coming of Gandhiji, Hindu-Muslim unity was made a first task of the Congress. For a brief while we had a glorious era of communal concord. It left a rich legacy in the shape of valuable leaders and workers for the Congress, but it did not last long. The malady was too deep rooted and did not yield to such palliatives as a pact on the khilafat issue. The worst instance of its break-out was the murder of Swami Shradhanand, who had earlier preached from the pulpit of Jama Masjid. Riots had begun to appear quite early. Some of them were no doubt due to forces working from behind the scenes and had an uncanny knack of reappearing at critical times of national movements. But this does not explain them wholly.

Religion and Politics

In fact the Khilafat agitation also encouraged a sort of revivalist tendency and pan-islamic sentiment. Gandhiji has been criticised for introducing religion into politics and thus encouraging religious differences—a bifurcated revivalism. But it is not fully realised how at the root of communal differences was the Hindu attitude of a sectarian superiority-complex, the mentality of 'Untouchability', while the Muslim mind is marked with fanaticism. Thus Iqbal's analaysis, though showing partisanship is mainly correct:

Sach Keh dun ai brahman — gar too bura na mane
Tere sanamqada ke — but ho gai purane
apnon se ber rakhna — tunen buton se sikha
waiz ko bhi sikhaya — Jang-o-jadal khuda nen

As we now know, in tolerating the Hindu sectarianism and the Muslim fanaticism, we were rearing a ferocious beast in our back-yard. The brutality of riots had been severest in the most backward parts— the riff-raff of Calcutta, the orthodox villagers of

Bihar, the Pir ridden districts of Multan, Rawalpindi and Hazara and the fanatical elements among the Sikhs. Gandhiji has been attacking the problem at its root and his religion has been on a non-sectarian and highest moral plane, the universalism of Kabir and Nanak. His is a long-term plan but is more valuable than a thousand palliative measures.

Another factor, that soon came in was the electoral contests based on separate franchise. Gandhiji had rightly advised the boycott of the legislatures under those conditions. But the Swaraj Party had later taken up this work.

Factor of Political Power

"If the Congress and the Muslim League could have continued on the path of legislative non-co-operation, they might have risen above much of the communalism and avoided a clash. But the pressure of events brought them both into constitutionalism and elections. It was the juxtaposition of a bifurcated revivalism and spiritualism with separate electorates that complicated the political situation."

(Beni Prasad, 'The Hindu-Muslim Question')

The work of the Swarajist Party from 1923 in this way brought in and promoted antagonism.

"Its very success drew it into the vortex of separate electorates and separatist politics and exposed nationalism to misunderstanding."

"Finally the wider enfranchisement enacted in 1935 brought more than 36 million of the population of British India under separatist influences. Enfranchisement would bring the masses forthwith into the flaming atmosphere of phrase and feeling which separate electorates have generated". (Ibid.)

A Hindu-Muslim problem had grown up in the shape of Muslim political demands by the time of the Gauhati Congress. Early in 1927 there was an exchange of thought between Hindu and Muslim leaders and some prominent Muslim leaders formulated what came to be known as Muslim proposals on the basis of joint electorates. There were four points in this early demand: separate Sindh province, Reforms in the N.W.F.P. and Baluchistan, proportionate representation in Punjab and Bengal and one third seats in the Central Assembly. A settlement between the Congress and the League seemed to be in sight, when the Congress met at Madras.

In pursuance of the Madras Congress resolution, the scheme of constitutional reforms known as Nehru Report was later placed before an All Parties Convention at Calcutta. The Muslim League withdrew from the Convention mainly on the issue of the residuary powers being vested in the provinces or the centre. The Muslim All-Parties Conference came into existence and the two wings of the League that had earlier split on the issue of the boycott of the Simon Commission became merged and the fourteen points of Mr. Jinnah became the Muslim demands.

It is interesting to quote what Lord Birkenhead the Secretary of State said at that time in laying down the policy for the Viceroy. He communicated his advice to the Viceroy, Lord Reading: "The more it is made obvious that these antagonisms are profound, and affect immense and irreconcilable section of the population, the more conspicuously is the fact illustrated that we, and we alone, can play the part of composer." When the Commission was boycotted in India he wrote again to the Viceroy Lord Irwin: "We have always relied on the non-boycotting Muslims, on the depressed community, on the business interests, and on many others, to break down the attitude of boycott. You and Simon must be the judges whether or not it is expedient, in these direction to try to make a breach in the wall of antagonism, even in the course of the present visit.'

The government sabotaged attempts of communal settlement by the simple device of outbidding the leaders and granting all reasonable or unreasonable demands of the Muslims. It, infact, became a race, henceforward, between the rising demands of the Muslim League on the one hand and the Government concessions on the other, and the other communities had no chance to catch up with them.

At the Round Table Conference, the Communal Award gave Mr. Jinnah practically all his points and was very unjust to the Hindus and Sikhs. It became a source of enduring friction. Attempts to find a substitute for it by the Unity Conference of Allahabad were sabotaged by the Government and the agreement reached, nullified.

It was at the time of the Round Table Conference in London also that the first seeds of Pakistan were laid. This story has been told by Mr. S.

Ansari in his "Pakistan" and we quote from this book.

First Seeds of 'Pakistan'

"In 1930-31 as the reforms were on the anvil at the first and Second Round Table Conferences, the Muslims appeared committed to the establishment of an Indian federation. J. Coatman, C.I.E., writing in 1932 at the time of the Third Round Table Conference, said: "The creation of a strong, united India, including the whole of British India and the Indian States and the borderland in the North-West, whose inclusion in India was one of the first and most fundamental conditions of her nationhood, is, day by day, being made impossible, and in its place it seems that there may be brought into being a powerful Mohammadan State in the north and north-west, with its eyes definitely turned away from India, towards the rest of the Moslem world of which it forms a fringe, whilst away to the south and east there will be what? A Hindu India, homogeneous and united? Perhaps! Or a vast area divided between warring princes and the fighting races of Old Hindustan as it has been in the past, and may easily be so again in the future? Very likely! . . ."

The seed found a fertile soil in the minds of some young Muslims who were opposed to the All-India Federation and believed that the Safeguards which were being provided in the constitution were useless, and "our brave but voiceless nation is being crucified on the altar of Hindu nationalism." In 1933 for the first time the Muslims, hitherto called a minority community, were called "a nation" by a Punjabi Moslem, Choudhury Rahmat Ali (an under-graduate of Cambridge), who gave the movement a shape and a form. He propounded the idea that the Punjab, N.W.F.P., (Afghan Province), Kashmir, Sindh, and Baluchistan should be formed into a separate Muslim State called Pakistan. This proposal was different from that of Dr. Iqbal in what Dr. Iqbal proposed the amalgamation of these provinces into a single State forming a unit of the All-India Federation, Choudhury Rahmat Ali proposed that these provinces should have an independent federation of their own. Leaflets advocating Pakistan were distributed by Choudhury Rahmat Ali to the members of Parliament and the Members of the Round Table Conference, but no Indian, Hindu or Muslim, took any interest in them. Muslim witnesses described the Pakistan scheme in August 1933 to the Joint Parliamentary Select Committee as follows:—

A. Yusuf Ali: "As far as I know it is only a student scheme; no responsible people have put it forward."

Ch. Zafrulla Khan: "So far as we have considered it, we have considered it chimerical and impracticable."

Dr. Khalifa Shuja-ud-Din: "Perhaps it will be enough to say that no such scheme has been considered by any representative gentleman or association so far."

It is significant that questions about Pakistan were asked at this Conference. It is still more significant that the initiative came from the British—they seem, from the record, to have pressed their question while the Indian (Muslim) delegates seem uninterested and anxious to pass on to the next point.

At the time it was generally believed among Indian students at Cambridge that Choudhary Rahmat Ali, who was not pursuing any specific course of studies and had no ostensible means of support, but at the same time had ample funds of his somewhat luxurious entertainment of celebrities and propagandist activities, derived his inspiration and funds from the India Office. This seems to be confirmed by the fact that although in India none had heard of or talked of Pakistan and the Muslim Delegation showed no interest in it, yet the Diehard Press and the Churchill-Lord Lloyd group of the Conservative Party vexed eloquent over it and saw in it a suggestion of the gravest import with the result that question were asked in the House of Parliament on several occasions[1]."

("Pakistan" by S. Ansari, Pp. 4-7)

[1] The following from a letter in the *Statesman* of Dec 9, '47 may be read with interest, after Pakistan is achieved to show 'what is in a name': The writer is one Md. Fazlul Karim from Port Said

Sir,—Yesterday I mentioned to some Egyptian officers that I was a Pakistani. They started laughing.

One said, "How can you fellows presume to call your heathen country Pakistan while Arabia is here?" Another asked, "Is it true that your ambition is to snatch from Egypt the leadership of the Islamic world on the ground that you have a few million more half starved people?" A third was more serious. He said, "I think your choice of name is rather unfortunate. It would irritate the Muslims of other countries, while it can never command the sincere loyalty of the non-Muslims of your own country."

I know this was badinage, but I am not sure that there was not some truth in what the last man said.

British Boosting of the League

It is interesting to note the phenomenal development of the League into the most powerful Muslim Party in recent years, and to estimate the part played by the policy and intrigue of the British Government in this rise to power. The British Government is pursuance of their object has consistently boosted the "moderate" elements and ignored the advanced nationalist or extremists and at the time of the Round Table Conference, a breaking point had reached when the Congress demand for inclusion of Dr. Ansari as a delegate was vehemently opposed. Since 1937 the League has repeatedly asserted that it was the only authoritative representative political organisation for the Musalmans in India. But it never had the courage to publish its membership figures. It opposed the proposal of a Constituent Assembly, elected by universal adult franchise with separate electorates, because it has never been confident of winning a majority of Muslim votes. The League hesitated to accept a plebicite of the whole population in Muslim majority areas. It had strong all India rival parties. The Congress had the allegiances of a considerable number of the politically conscious Muslims and before 1942 was also beginning to have an increasing influence among the peasants. Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind had little sympathy with the League. The Shia political Conference, comprising of almost all the Indian Shias, estimated to be no less than 20 per cent of the Muslim Community was against the League claim. So was the Momin Ansar Conference claiming to represent the 'Depressed Classes' of Muslims, the labourers, artisans etc.; and the Ahrars who represented the most active political party of Muslim in the Punjab. The azad Muslim Conference, founded in 1940 in opposition to the League was a congregation of all Muslim organisation in India except the Leaguers and the Khaksars and later the Khaksars also repudiated the policy of the Muslim League. The fact was the League represented the conservative and capitalist-cum-landlord element and had no constructive or forward programme or policy.

The Government not only treated the League as the sole representative power all along, giving them a power to veto any settlement, but put the League in power by intrigue and unconstitutional interference of the provincial Governors, dismissing non-league cabinets and putting league Cabinets in power. This attempt often failed but the League was able to form ministries in Bengal and Sindh.

The League played a willing part as a tool of the British imperialism in obstructing all progress in its desire for power. There were repeated attempts made by the Congress to come to an understanding with Mr. Jinnah. The Congress Presidents and Mahatma Gandhi knocked at Mr. Jinnah's doors often, too often, it is estimated by some. The League demands were either too vague or too fast moving to be overtaken by acceptance. During the War years, when the Congress was engaged in a life and death struggle, the League decided for Pakistan. The shape and size of this Pakistan changed and expanded throughout and what Mr. Jinnah ultimately got could have been improved upon if Rajaji's and Gandhiji's offer had been considered by him at an earlier period.



CHAPTER XXXIV

PLANS OF FREEDOM WITH DIVISION

Syed Anisur Rahman

(Editor "Naiaindagi")



THE situation in India after the War had been of a rapidly mounting crisis. The suppression and frustration of the aspirations of the people during the War and earlier had now given birth to an irresistible upsurge. The administration under the old imperial order, on the other hand had been showing signs of complete bankruptcy. The desperate attempts to divert the popular upsurge into fratricidal channels of communal strife had only deepened the crisis. This policy had weakened and demoralised the administrative apparatus and had given rise to corruption, inefficiency and the great Bengal famine and a deepening food crisis. It also had spread contempt for law and order and the menace of a general conflagration loomed on the horizon.

It was impossible for the British to cope with this situation in the changed international situation and position of Great Britain in the world. Also a Labour Government had come into power after a dramatic land-slide throwing off the War hero Mr. Churchill.

As Cripps later, on March 5, 1946 revealed in the House of Commons :

> "There were fundamentally two alternatives facing the Government. First, they could endeavour to strengthen British control in India on the basis of a considerable reinforcement of British troops . . . The second alternative was to accept the fact that the first alternative was not possible . . One thing that was quite obviously impossible was to decide to continue our responsibility indefinitely and indeed against our own wishes into a period when we had not the power to carry it out."

Two events that accelerated the British decision to reach a settlement before the situation passed entirely out of their hands were the trial of the I.N.A. prisoners and the revolt of Indian naval service, as giving pointers of what was simmering under the surface of sullen discontent in India.

During the period of one year, three successive Plans were proposed : Cabinet Mission Plan on June, '46, Attlee Declaration of February, '47 and lastly the Mountbatten Plan of June, '7. One common factor of these Plans, as of the earlier Cripps proposals was, however, the building up of an elaborate structure based on the lines of communal differences and the States.

During this period the political field in India had been totally occupied by the hectic activity of these negotiations between the British Government, the League and the Congress, the Congress eager to attain country's freedom, the British, it would seem, eager to make a formal transfer, but also anxious to protect, according to plan, the British political, economic and strategical interests, in the several parts of India that were proposed, and the League playing what it thought to be a clever game of 'Carving out a State' without having to strike a blow for it.

It is too early yet to tell who was most successful in the pursuit of these different objectives in the plan as it was accepted by all three and as it was handled subsequently by their statesmen and leaders and by the mightier hands of the forces of history or

the socio-economic forces in the country in the world-setting.

A British M.P.'s Delegation was sent to India in early January, 1946 to ascertain the views of Indian leaders. Prof. Laski, the political philosopher of the Labour Party had expressed his fear that unless Britain settled with India, "it may be too late after the summer". The M.P.s later reported to Premier Attlee saying that I.N.A. dominated the Indian scene and that labour unrest and impending famine would be very grave factors.

Mr. Attlee announced on February 19, 1946 that a Mission with three Cabinet members would visit India shortly. On the same day the R.I.N. rating strike which developed into a mutiny took place. On this day also, Pandit Nehru stated that "the basis of talks with Britain would be recognition of Indian freedom first." On the next day the leader of the M.P. Delegation said, "We must quit India quickly or we shall be kicked out." Mr. Jinnah on his side expressed that Pakistan would be the guiding principle of his talks with Britain. The R.I.N. mutiny became the cause of grat grave unrest throughout the country, the R.I.A.F. Strike began and the Postal employees served an ultimatum. Situation in India required energetic handling, if India's good-will was to be retained with the quittal.

On March 11, Mahatma Gandhi expressed the view that it would be wrong to suspect the bonafides of the Cabinet Mission.

Cabinet Mission

The British Cabinet Mission that had been announced on February the 19th, 1946 consisted of Lord Pathick Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Albert V. Alexander, to act in association with the Viceroy. The mission arrived in India towards the end of March and after interviewing the leaders of different groups, parties and communities arranged a Conference at Simla. This Conference lasted about a week and broke down on the issue, both of Pakistan and parity in the proposed interim Government. Though unsuccessful the Simla Conference cleared the issues and in a way subsequent plans followed from it.

The Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy then issued a statement on May 16th, 1946, expressing the decision that though no agreement had been reached, immediate arrangements should be made whereby Indians may decide the future constitution of India and an Interim Government be set up until the new constitution could be brought into being.

Cabinet Mission's Plan

The statement, after examining the question of a separate and fully independent sovereign state of Pakistan as claimed by the Muslim League, came to the conclusion that 'the setting up of a separate sovereign state of Pakistan on the lines claimed by the Muslim League would not solve the communal minority problem; nor can we see any justification for including within a sovereign Pakistan those district of the Punjab and Bengal and Assam in which the population is predominantly non-Muslim.' They considered, further, whether a smaller sovereign Pakistan, confined to the Muslim majority areas alone, might be possible basis of a compromise, but they felt 'forced to the conclusion that neither a larger nor a smaller sovereign state of Pakistan would provide an acceptable solution for the communal problem.' 'Apart from the great force of the foregoing arguments,' they declared, 'there are weighty administrative, economic and military considerations.' In the result they said: 'We are, therefore, unable to advise the British Government that the power which at present resides in British hands should be handed over to two entirely separate sovereign states.' They put forward their own proposals in paragraph 15 of the Statement, which is as follows:

'We recommend that the constitution should take the following basic form:

'(1) There should be a union of India, embracing both British India and the States, which should deal with the following subjects:—
Foreign Affairs: Defence; and Communications; and should have the powers necessary to raise the finances required for the above subjects.

'(2) The Union should have an Executive and a Legislature constituted from British Indian and States representatives. Any questions raising a major communal issue in the Legislature should require for its decision a majority of the representatives present and voting

of each of the two major communities as well as a majority of all the members present and voting.

'(3) All subjects other than Union subjects and all residuary powers should vest in the Provinces.

'(4) The States will retain in all subjects and powers other than those ceded to the Union.

'(5) Provinces should be free to form Groups with executives and legislatures, and each Group could determine the Provincial subjects to be taken in common.

'(6) The Constitution of the Union and of the Groups should contain a provision whereby any Province could, by a majority vote of its Legislative Assembly, call for a reconsideration of the terms of the constitution after an initial period of 10 years and at 10-yearly intervals thereafter.'

For framing the General Constituent Assembly, the provinces were divided into three sections A, B and C Section A comprised of all provinces with Muslim minority. Section B of the Punjab, N.W.F.P. and Sind and Section C of Bengal and Assam. Provinces were to have power to opt of the group in accordance with certain procedure. The States were to be given 93 seats, the method of selection of the State representatives was to be determined by consultation. An Interim Government was to be set up in the meanwhile at once.

The clause giving power to the Provinces to co-opt out of a group later became the subject of prolonged controversy and a dead-lock.

The Statement was subjected to close scrutiny by all the parties concerned. The President of the Muslim League, in his statement of May 22, criticized the Plan.

The Congress Working Committee passed a resolution on May 24, 1947 rejecting the plan mainly on the following points.

(1) Regarding the Grouping of Provinces, the Congress interpretation emphasised that provinces are free at the initial stage to decide to join or remain outside the group suggested in the proposals.

(2) The Constituant Assembly was to be considered a sovereign body.

(3) Provision of popular representation in the Constituent Assembly regarding the States.

(4) Objection to parity of representation in Interim Government with the Muslim League.

On May 25th the Cabinet Mission issued another Statement with a view to meeting the points raised by the various parties.

Interim Government Announced

In the meanwhile the Viceroy was negotiating with representatives of the Congress and the Muslim League on the number of members and personnel of the Interim Government. As these negotiations did not result in an agreement between the parties the Viceroy announced the names of the candidates of the members of the Interim Government consisting of six Hindus, all members of the Congress, including one member of the Depressed Classes, five Muslims, representatives of the Muslim League, one Sikh, one Christian and one Parsi the last of whom at the time held an official position under the Government of India.

On the 25th June, Congress Working Committee announced their rejection of the plan of Interim Government. They adopted a comprehensive resolution: "Congress can never give up the national character of the Congress, or accept an artificial and unjust parity or agree to the veto of communal group. The Committee are unable to accept the proposals for the formation of an Interim Government as contained in the Government's statement of June 16. Committee have however decided that Congress should join the proposed Constituent Assembly with a view to framing the Constitution of a free, united and democratic India."

The Muslim Council had meet on June 5—6, 1946 and accepted the plan, with certain provisions.

But in view of the refusal of the Congress to join in the Interim Government, Lord Wavell



The Congress High Command, with Dr. P. C. Ghosh, Sri Shankar Rao Deo, Dr. Khan Sahab, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Sardar Patel and Dr. Rajendra Prasad.



Master Tara Singh and the Sikh Leaders.



Another Infructuous Meeting.



The Cabinet Mission.

announced on June 26, 1946 that he would set up a temporary 'caretaker' Government of officials to carry on in the interim period.

Muslim League's Protest and Direct Action

The Council of the All-India Muslim League met towards the end of July and passed a resolution withdrawing its acceptance of the Cabinet Mission's proposals. By another resolution, the Council resolved that 'now the time has come for the Muslim nation to resort to direct action to achieve Pakistan, to assert their just rights, to vindicate their honour and to get rid of the present British slavery and the contemplated future caste-Hindu domination.'

Viceroy invited Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to constitute an Interim Government, which he did. It consisted of six Hindus, including one Depressed Class member, three Muslims, of whom two belonged neither to the Congress nor to the League, one Sikh one Christian and one Parsi. The members took office on September 2, 1946.

League's Direct Action and Riots

In pursuance of its resolution passed on July 29, the Muslim League fixed August 16 as 'Direct Action Day', to be observed by Muslims all over the country. The demonstration was organized on a large scale, and in Bengal that day was declared a public holiday by the League Ministry in spite of protests from all classes outside the League. The day opened in Calcutta with rioting, loot, murder and arson, which lasted for several days causing immense loss of life and property. Communal rioting broke out in several other places also. The riots in Calcutta were followed shortly afterwards by a very serious outbreak in East Bengal, in the district of Noakhali, which spread to the adjoining districts of Comilla, Chittagong, Dacca, etc. Hindus suffered terribly. The news of the atrocities committed in Calcutta and in Noakhali reached Bihar from where large numbers go to Bengal for employment and there was very serious rioting in Bihar, and in some parts of the U. P. In these places the Muslims suffered terribly. Some time later, riots started in the North West Frontier Province and the Punjab where the Hindus and Sikhs were subjected to tremendous loss of life and property.

The League brought into the Interim Govt.

Soon after the Interim Government was formed the Viceroy started negotiation with the Muslim League with a view to bringing in its representatives and inducing them to join it.

It was pointed out that the League should be required to accept the Statement of May 16 and thereby indicate their readiness to join the Constituent Assembly before they could be admitted into the Interim Government. Lord Wavell, it would appear, however, did not get a clear decision from the League on that point. He assumed that Mr. Jinnah had accepted the stipulation regarding acceptance of the Statement of May 16 and invited him to nominate five persons to the Interim Government.

The League joined the Interim Government in the last week of October.

Impossible condition in the Cabinet

Before the members of the League joined the Interim Government, the other members had acted as a team and a Cabinet.

The League members, however, were not prepared to accept the Interim Government as a Cabinet, but only as an Executive Council under the Government of India Act.

A deadlock was often created and the position became more and more difficult, and a demand was made on behalf of the Congress that the Muslim League Members should accept the Statement of May 16 and decide to join the Constituent Assembly and recognise the basis of working the Interim Government, or go out of the Interim Government.

On invitation from the British Government Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Baldev Singh, Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan went to London with Lord Wavell in the last week of November, and had discussions in London which, as was not unexpected failed to bring about an agreed settlement.

December 6, Statement

On December 6, 1946, H.M.G. made another statement, supporting the League interpretation of the grouping clause, even if the Federal Court was appealed to.

The Congress Working Committee considered the situation, especially with regard to Assam, which had only 33·7 per cent Muslim population but yet had been assigned to group C. The choice was between accepting or scrapping the whole plan of May 16.

The Congress Working Committee and later, on January 6, 1947, the All-India Congress Committee, relying on the strength of the people of Assam to assert themselves against unjust imposition of a constitution on them, decided to accept the interpretation put by H.M.G. and to proceed with the Constituent Assembly. The League however, still refused to come in.

First Meeting of the Constituent Assembly

The Constituent Assembly met in Delhi according to schedule, on December 9, 1946. Members representing all groups, sections and communities in the country except the nominees of the Muslim League attended. The Constituent Assembly proceeded cautiously and did not take any decision of consequence, in expectation of the League joining.

H. M. G. Statement of February 20

But the League would not enter, and its refusal to act in accordance with the Statement of December 6, 1946, was followed by an orgy of riots. The position had become intolerable. The situation in the country was becoming more and more difficult every day. The pressure of events was such that the British Government came out with another statement of policy on February 20, 1947.

This statement, (1) fixed a date—June 1948, by which power was to be transferred. (2) It made it clear that unless a Government was established with the authority and consent of all, His Majesty's Government might have to decide to whom power could be transferred; and in case of difficulty, they might have to transfer it to more than one authority in the country. (3) It also made it clear that so far as the Princes were concerned, paramountcy was to end and not to be transferred to the Government in British India. This statement thus made it necessary for all parties in India to establish an authority to which power could be transferred. As it happened it proved a great incentive to seizure of power and authority in the provinces.

The League Crusade in the Provinces

Another statement made at the same time announced the recall of Lord Wavell and the appointment of Lord Mountbatten of Burma as the Viceroy of India. Lord Mountbatten arrived in India on March 23, 1947, and took charge. The new Viceroy found India, particularly the north-western part of it and Bengal, in the grip of serious communal riots in which the sufferings were mostly on one side, namely the side of the Hindus and Sikhs. The statement of February 20 had contemplated transfer of power to more than one authority in the country, and the Muslim League seemed to be concentrating its attempts on capturing the Provinces where it was not in power. In Bengal, there was a Muslim League Ministry functioning. Assam, which was also claimed by the Muslim League, although it happened to be a non-Muslim majority Province, in which the Hindus constituted by far the largest majority, was being run by a Congress Ministry. In the Punjab there was a Unionist Ministry, which had amongst its members Muslims, Sikhs, and Hindus, but from which the Muslim League as a party had kept itself aloof. In the North-West Frontier Province, the Congress had, at the general election in 1946, won not only a majority of seats, but also a majority of the Muslims seats, and there was, in consequence, a Congress Ministry in office there. In Sind, the general election in 1946 had returned a majority opposed to the Muslim League. There were two Europeans who played a very important part, but they were unable to give the League Party a very clear majority. The Governor, however, ignored the majority party and asked the leader of the League to form the Ministry with the help of two Europeans, which he did. After some months a fresh election was manoeuvred and the Muslim League managed to secure a majority, so the Muslim League had now a Ministry in Sind. It would thus appear that there were only two Provinces—Bengal and Sind—in which the Muslim League had a majority in the Legislative Assembly and had, there-

fore, formed its own ministry. Its attempts, after the declaration of February 20, were directed towards capturing by some means or other the Ministries in the other Provinces claimed by the League for Pakistan, so that when the time for transfer of power actually came, the League may claim that it was in possession of those Provinces, the League Ministries were functioning there and that power should, therefore, be transferred to them. A serious mass agitation, accompanied by violence, rioting, arson, loot and murder on an extensive scale, was accordingly launched in the Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province. Sir Khizr Hayat Khan Tiwana, the Unionist Prime Minister for the Punjab, resigned, and as it was not possible to form a Muslim League Ministry for want of support in the Assembly, the administration of the Province was taken over by the Governor under section 93, of the Government of India Act, and the Province was afterwards governed in this way. In the North-west Frontier Province, the Ministry had struck to its position and declared that it had the support of the majority in the Assembly and had no reason to submit to coercion by the League, with the result that a serious state of disturbance continued in that Province. Lord Mountbatten had not come unprepared for facing such a situation and he take energetic steps to find a solution. He held consultations with party leaders and others and formulated certain proposals of his own. It became clear that the League would not be content with anything less than a division of the country into Muslim and non-Muslim regions, and the disturbances would continue until a settlement one way or the other was reached. No one outside the League was in favour of a division of India. Not only the Hindus and Sikhs and Congressmen, but also Christians, Parsis, and Muslims outside the League were bitterly opposed to any division. At the same time, the Congress had also held the opinion that it could not force any portion of the country to remain with it if it chose otherwise. There were large tracts in the central and eastern portions of the Punjab and in the western and northern portions of Bengal the majority of the population of which was and is non-Muslim. It followed as a corroiary that if the Muslim League insisted upon secession of certain portions of India on the ground that their population, the majority of which was Muslim, wanted such secession, equally could others who did not wish to go with them keep out. Therefore if Pakistan was to be established, the Punjab and Bengal were to be divided.

June 3rd Statement—The Mountbatten Plan

Lord Mountbatten had first sent some of his Advisers under Lord Ismay to consult with His Majesty's Government, and subsequently he himself flew to London. He returned to India with a statement on behalf of His Majesty's Government, and the authority to such steps as were necessary to effect transfer of power. The statement was published simultaneously in India and London on June 3, 1947. It laid down the method for ascertaining the wishes of those Provinces and parts of the country which were supposed to be in favour of secession, and in case of division was decided upon, the procedure to effect that division. If the decision by any of them was in favour of a division of the province. The Province was to be divided and the boundaries were to be settled by a Boundary Commission which would take into consideration all factors and not only the population of a district, in determining the boundaries. The statement announced that legislation would be introduced in Parliament conferring Dominion Status on India, then almost immediately and that if division was decided upon in India, then there would be two Dominions, otherwise only one. Paramountcy would cease simultaneously with the establishment of Dominion Status. It was expected that legislation will be completed and power transferred by the middle of August at the latest, thus anticipating the dead-line originally fixed for transfer of power by ten months or so.

The North-West Frontier Province was asked to decide the question by a referendum and in the British Baluchistan same method was to be adopted for ascertaining the wishes of the people. As regards Assam, there was only one district, Sylhet, which had a Muslim majority, and in case it was decided that Bengal should be partitioned, a referendum was to be held in Sylhet district to decide whether it should continue to form part of Assam or be amalgamated with the Province of Eastern Bengal. This statement of policy was accepted by the Working Committee of the Congress, and its acceptance was later endorsed by the A.-I.C.C. The Council of the All-India Muslim League accepted the plan at a meeting held on June 9, 1947 with certain reservations.

As was expected the division was decided in the Punjab and the Bengal. The referendum resulted in N. W. F. Provinces, Baluchistan and parts of Assam joining the seceding parts of India.

The referendum in the N. W. F. had taken place in opposition of the strong protest and boycott of the party in power there, Dr. Khan's party, who had only recently been returned in a clear majority in the provincial elections.

What sudden political blitz
Has broken India to bits?
Lo, with a proud and bitter hand
They carve my ancient motherland,
And, just to satisfy the whims
Of individuals, with the knife
Of callous hate, they chop her limbs,
Bleed her until she gasps for life.

* * * *

Our ancestors shall rise in ire
And rescue every inch of earth
Where truth hath lit its alter-fire,
And wisdom hath revealed its worth
Through aeons upon aeons, which
Have brimmed for us with lumined years,
India shall yet be rescued, rich
With her pure heritage of seers.

* * * *

Surely it cannot come to naught,
The penance and the prayer of sages,
The grand accumulated thought
They wrought for us through deathless ages:
Surely it cannot be in vain
That millions in the past have risen
Against the tyrant's rusting chain,
Daring dark lifetimes borne in prison;

* * * *

Our courage yet shall pass the test
And at no very distant date:
Your worker-children cannot rest,
Your peasant-children shall not wait;
In sweat they are united, and,
Brothers in toil, they worship you.
Together, bound in strength, they stand
One-willed, unshakable and true:

* * * *

And nobody shall dare divide
Their wills united to one will,
While you, O Mother, are their pride,
They are determined to fulfil
The vision of that son of yours,
Gandhi, whose eyes are red with tears
While still he plies his patient oars
To bear you over stormy years.

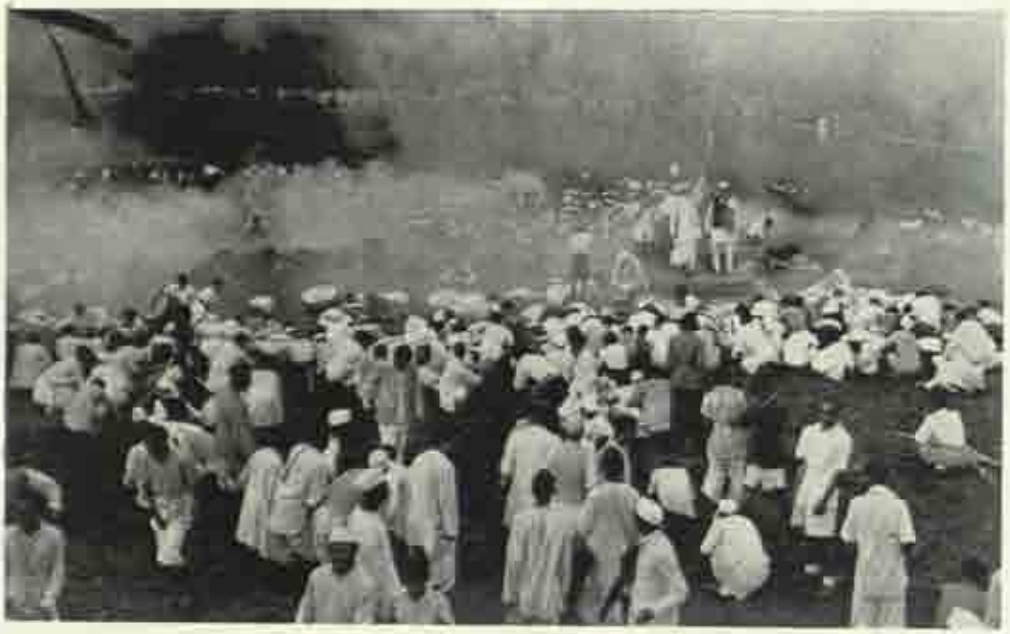
* * * *

Nothing shall sever or estrange
Brother from brother, nor divide
Our motherland, though they may change
The patches on their map in pride;
It shall not be for very long,—
You know that, Mother, more than we:
Our love for you is mountain-strong,
Our faith is larger than the sea.

* * * *

These changes are but fugitive,
Futile shall be their best endeavour:
Your children live, your children live
And claim you motherland forever;
And they shall surely fight and shape,
Until all talk of boundary ceases,
Imperialism's measuring-tape
Itself be cut to little pieces.

(From "Betrayal" by Harendranath Chattopadhaya)



Tear Gas on Congress meeting.



The Prime Minister and the Rashtrapati in the Consembly



The opening of the Constituent Assembly of India

"Swaraj will not be a free gift of the British Parliament. It will be a declaration of India's full self-expression, expressed through an Act of Parliament. But it will be merely a courteous ratification of the declared wish of the people of India. The ratification will be a treaty to which Britain will be a party. The British Parliament, when the settlement comes, will ratify the wishes of the people of India as expressed through the freely chosen representatives."

(Gandhiji in 1922)

"My prayer is that the Constitution that you are going to make may be reared for immortality." (Dr. S. Sinha)

CHAPTER XXXV

THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF INDIA

Sri Dharmyash Dev

Opening of the Constituent Assembly

THE inangural meeting of the Indian Constituent Assembly took place on the 9th December, 1946 in the Constitutional Hall of the Council House, New Delhi.

Dr. Sacchidanauda Sinha of Bihar, the oldest member of the Constituent Assembly was the Interim President pending the election of the permanent chairman.

Messages of congratulations and good wishes were received from the government of U. S. A., China and Australia. Mr. Acheson, the U. S. Secretary of State in his message said—"India has a great contribution to maker to the peace, stability and cultural advancement of mankind and your deliberations will be watched with deep interest and hope by freedom-loving people throughout the entire world."

'A constitution reared for immortality' was held up as the ideal before Indian Constituent Assembly by Dr. Sinha.

On December 11, 1946, the Constituent Assembly chose Dr. Rajendra Prasad as its permanent Chairman. Remarkable tributes were paid to the personality of the new President by speakers from all sections of the House.

The President in the course of his address said among other things—"I am aware, that this Assembly has been born with certain limitations placed on it from its birth. We may not forget, disregard or ignore these limitations in the course of our proceedings and in arriving at our decisions. But I know, too, that in spite of these limitations the Assembly is a self-governing and self-determining independent body in whose proceedings no outside authority can interfere and whose decisions no one outside can upset, alter or modify."

Declaration of Objective

On December 13, 1946 Pandit Nehru moved in the Constituent Assembly a resolution outlining the objective of the Assembly, namely an Independent Sovereign Republic with all powers and authority derived from the people, which was unanimously passed on 22nd January, 1947.

The Constituent Assembly had re-assembled on January 20, 1947, in its Second Session.

After the passing of the resolution that came to be known as India's Charter of Freedom an Advisory Committee of 50 members was set up and the President of the Constituent Assembly was empowered to nominate up to 22 further members. The Advisory Committee has the widest terms of reference of all the Committees set up and is meant to advise the Constituent Assembly on the Fundamental Rights of citizens of the Union of Free India, the protection of minorities and the administration of backward and tribal areas.

The Third Session

The third session met on April 28, 1947, after two and a half months of storm and stress.

The routine of presenting credentials and signing the register was enlivened this time by the presence of the Prime Ministers and elected representatives of Baroda, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Udaipur, Patiala, Bikaner, Cochin and Rewa.

In replying to the President's welcome the Dewans and representatives spoke with glad enthusiasm of the integral unity of India and of the

fact that isolated existence would be untenable for any State. Sardar Panikkar said: "we are here by voluntary association. There was no coercion. No pressure has been brought to bear on us. Any one who says we are coerced insults our intelligence."

Pandit Nehru moved the resolution to record the Report of the Negotiating Committee set up by the Constituent Assembly and of the States' Negotiating Committee.

The most important achievement of this brief 5 day session was the adoption of the Fundamental Rights as proposed by Sardar Patel on behalf of the Advisory Committee. There was a lively debate on various clauses of the Report. It transpired that our Fundamental Rights will be enforceable by law—justiciable, on the model of the Irish Constitution. The vision of a free India that these rights bring is magnificent and modern in outlook.

The 'Rights of Equality' guarantee equal rights to every citizen in the Union, irrespective of religion, race, caste or sex, and the State will recognise no inequalities on the basis of these differences.

At long last the disgraceful institution of 'untouchability' will no longer exist and imposition of any disability on that account will be an offence.

Titles were also abolished so far as their confirmment by the State is concerned.

The Fundamental Rights guarantee freedom of speech and expression, the freedom to assemble peaceably and without arms, to form associations and unions, to move throughout the Union without let or hindrance and to reside in any part of it.

Freedom of Religious belief and practice was guaranteed equally to all—to freely profess, practice and propagate a religion subject of course, to public order, morality and health.

The assurance given to minorities was unequivocal and categorical. Minorities in every Unit of the free India Union shall be protected by law in respect of their language, script and culture.

The July Session was markedly different from the first three sessions. Not only the representatives of the Indian States attended it in all but full strength, but the Muslim League members from India were present for the first time.

The various Committees formed by the Constituent Assembly, notably the Union Constitution Committee, the Provincial Constitution Committee and the Advisory Committee had laboured hard and faithfully during the months between April and July session. The April Session had closed when the country was in a twilight of suspence. It was not known whether India will remain united or whether Pakistan had to come. But after the Mountbatten Plan of July 3, 1947, the position, such as it was had become clear and certain and the work of the Assembly was pursued with determination and despatch.

In strange contrast to what had been happening outside since this 3rd of June, the atmosphere inside the Assembly was marked with cordiality. The President with his characteristic good grace and courtesy had firmly disallowed questions demanding assurance of loyalty from the League members. Such an assurance was however given by them, though as it happened their leader Chaudhari Khaliquz-Zaman later left Indian Dominion and his followers in a sudden and stealthy way for Pakistan.

Sardar Patel, as Chairman of the Provincial Constitution Committee presented his Report. Normally, the Provincial Legislatures were to be unicameral, but a Second Chamber was allowed. The Executive will consist of a Governor elected on adult franchise and cabinet consisting of a Prime Minister and other Ministers.

Pandit Nehru presented the Report of the Union Constitution Committee. It is proposed to set up a Republic known as India, consisting of nine Governors' Provinces, five Chief Commissioners' Provinces and the Indian States. The Union Parliament will consist of two houses, the Raj Sabha or Council of States and the Lok Sabha or the House of People corresponding to the House of Lords and House of Commons of England. The head of the Indian Union will be known as The Rashtrapati or President to be elected every five years by an electoral college. The Union Cabinet was to be on the British model. There shall be a Supreme Court of the Indian Union having exclusive jurisdiction in any disputes between the Union and the Units or the Units inter se, and for enforcing Fundamental Rights.

On July 22 the new flag of free India was adopted.

CHAPTER XXXVI

TRYST WITH DESTINY

POLITICAL FREEDOM FOR ONE-FIFTH OF HUMAN RACE



'India be free';
Won't that be
A Himalayan dream?
How fantastic,
How absurd an idea,
That never occurred to me,
Two scores of years ago,
Aged people seemed to agree.

'Freedom', a gentle voice
Whispered that it should be the goal,
It first sprang from
A tiny body but with a great soul
It started as a gentle wave
But finally made the entire Indian Ocean roll.
Just as one wave after another in the ocean,
So moved on national aspirations unbound;
Imbued with the spirit of freedom,
The forces of revolution gathered around.

Suddenly and incredibly triumphed Wisdom
Wherein East and West met on a common ground.
What a miracle,
That Independence can be
Without a War,
History will tell you,
It has never happened before.
Be brave, forward,
Riders on the chariot of Time,
While approaching the mountain peak,
Redouble your efforts to climb,
Unfailingly will you arrive at your Ideal,
Lofty and beautiful, noble and sublime.

To the cause of Indian Freedom this poem is fervently dedicated, on this glorious day of the fifteenth of August, 1947, as a message of goodwill from China.

Chia-Luen Lo,
Ambassador of the Republic of China.

INDIA ASSUMES INDEPENDENCE

THE ceremony of Assumption of Power by India through her chosen representatives in the Constituent Assembly was fixed to take place on the mid-night of the August 14-15. The time chosen was perhaps to commemorate another midnight session, equally memorable, when a similar hazardous journey was undertaken and equally solemn dedication made. Some of these very men and women who took part in the drama on this day—and many others who thronged and cheered on the road outside and lit lamps and put up flags and festoons in towns and villages, had taken part in that earlier session and in the struggle that began on that midnight.

And yet how different was the setting. The city of thatch and canvass on the banks of the Ravi, the biting winter night and this gilded chamber, air-conditioned, lit by chandillier lights. The decorous benches and galleries, what a tame picture they make when we recall the tumultuous scenes, the midnight revelry—lead by the Rastrapati himself, from camp to camp on that earlier mid-night. It is

strange that a revolution has culminated in this way and an event of such colossal historical importance as the freedom of 400 million people is recorded in this brief manner.

The session in the chamber begins at 10-45 p.m. The galleries are full of a colourful crowd. Outside the roads are a surging mass. The proceeding commence with the 'Bande Mataram' song sung by Mrs. Suchata Kripalani, the wife of the Congress President. This is followed by a brief opening address of the President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad. Pandit Nehru then moves the pledge. He makes a stirring speech with deep emotion that greatly moved the audiance. On the motion of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, seconded by Chaudhury Khaliquzzaman and supported by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the members of the Constituent Assembly pledge to dedicate themselves to the service of India and her people to the end that this ancient land attain her rightful and honoured place in the world and make her full and willing contribution to the promotion of world peace and welfare of mankind.

The pledge was read out by Dr. Rajendra Prasad first in Hindi and then in English and repeated sentence by sentence by members rising in their seats, followed by blowing of conch-shells and lusty shouts of "Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai".

Before Pandit Nehru moved the above pledge two minute's silence was observed in memory of those who died in the struggle for freedom in India and elsewhere.

Both Dr. Prasad and Pandit Nehru paid striking tributes to Mahatma Gandhi's outstanding contributions to the cause of Indian freedom. Mention of Gandhiji's name practically sent the House into hysterics.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad moved the following resolution from the Chair amist thunderous cheers and acclamation:—

"I propose that it will be intimated to His Excellency the Viceroy that Constituent Assembly of India has assumed the power for the Government of India, and the Constituent Assembly of India has endorsed the recommendation that Lord Mountbatten be the Governor-General of India from August 15, 1947, and that this message be conveyed forthwith to Lord Mountbatten by the President and Pandit Nehru.

The House approved it amist acclamation. Mrs. Hansa Mehta then presented the National Flag of India to the Indian Constituent Assembly. In presenting the Flag to Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Mrs. Mehta said: "It is in the fitness of things that the first flag that is flying over this august House should be the gift from the women of India."

Dr. Prasad showed the Flag round. Proceedings came to a close with the singing of "Hindusthan Hamara" by Dr. Iqbal and Janaganamana Adhinayaka" by Rabindranath. Mrs. Sucheta Kripalani conducted the chorus.

Nehru Proposes oath of Allegiance

"Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially", declared India's first Premier Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru moving the resolution prescribing an oath for the members in the Constituent Assembly to-night.

"At the stroke of mid-night hour" Pandit Nehru said, "when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long supressed finds utterance. It is fitting that at this solemn moment we take the pledge of dedication to the service of India and her people and to the still larger cause of humanity".

Pandit Nehru continued: "At the dawn of history India started on her unending quest, and trackless centuries are filled with her striving and the grandeur of her success and her failures. Through good and ill fortune alike she has never lost sight of that quest or forgotten the ideals which gave her strength. We end today a period of ill fortune and India discovers herself again. The achievement we celebrate today is but a step, an opening of opportunity, to the greater triumps and achievements that await us. Are we brave enough and wise enough to grasp this opportunity, and accept the challenge of the future?

"Freedom and power bring responsibility. That responsibility rests upon this Assembly, a sovereign



Dr. Rajendra Prasad giving the pledge. Members of the Consembly dedicate themselves to the service of India to the end.



H. E. Lord Mountbatten addresses the Consembly.



Gandhiji brings peace to afflicted Bengal.
One of the numerous prayer meetings that attracted lakhs of Hindus & Muslims.

THE MIRACLE AT CALCUTTA



A three-mile long peace procession of men and women in Calcutta. 15th August witnessed memorable scenes of fraternisation.

body representing the sovereign people of India. Before the birth of freedom we have endured all the pains of labour and our hearts are heavy with the memory of this sorrow. Some of those pains continue even now. Nevertheless the past is over and it is the future that beckons to us now.

"That future is not one of ease or resting but of incessant striving so that we might fulfil the pledges we have so often taken and the vow we shall take today. The service of India means the service of the millions who suffer. It means the ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity. The ambition of the greatest man of our generation has been to wipe every tear from every eye. That may be beyond us but so long as there are tears and suffering, so long our work will not be over.

"And so we have to labour and to work and work hard to give reality to our dreams. Those dreams are for India but they are also for the world, for all the nations and peoples are too closely knit together today for any one of them to imagine that it can live apart. Peace has been said to be indivisible. So is freedom, so is prosperity now, and so also is disaster in this one world that can no longer be split into isolated fragments.

"To the people of India, whose representatives we are, we make appeal to join us with faith and confidence in this great adventure. This is no time for ill-will or blaming others. We have to build the noble mansion of Free India where all her children may dwell.

I beg to move, Sir, that it be resolved that :—

"After the last stroke of midnight, all members of the Constituent Assembly present on this occasion, do take the following pledge :—

"At this solemn moment when the people of India, through suffering and sacrifice, have secured freedom, I A member of the Constituent Assembly of India, do dedicate myself in all humility to the service of India and her people to the end that this ancient land attain her rightful place in the world and make her full and willing contribution to the promotion of world peace the welfare of mankind".

Dr. Rajendra Prasad had spoken in the night session and delivered a memorable speech on the morning of the 15th. This speech laying down, the shape of our struggle and of the freedom that came out of it, from one who has since then also become the Rashtrapati may be quoted in full.

Text of the Hon'ble President's speech on August 15, 10 A.M.

Let us in this momentous hour of our history, when we are assuming power for the governance of our country, recall in grateful remembrance the services and sacrifices of all those who laboured and suffered for the achievement of the independence we are attaining today. Let us on this historic occasion pay our homage to the maker of our modern history, Mahatma Gandhi, who has inspired and guided us through all these years of trial and travail and who inspite of the weight of years is still working in his own way to complete what is left yet unaccomplished.

2. Let us gratefully acknowledge that while our achievement is in no small measure due to our own sufferings and sacrifices, it is also the result of world forces and events and last though not least it is the consummation and fulfilment of the historic traditions and democratic ideals of the British race whose farsighted leaders and statesmen saw the vision and gave the pledges which are being redeemed today. We are happy to have in our midst as a representative of that race Viscount Mountbatten of Burma and his consort who have worked hard and played such an important part in bringing this about during the closing scenes of this drama. The period of domination by Britain over India ends today and our relationship with Britain is henceforward going to rest on a basis of equality, of mutual good will and mutual profit.

3. It is undoubtedly a day of rejoicing. But there is only one thought which mars and detracts from the fullness of this happy event. India, which was made by God and Nature to be one, which culture and tradition and history of millenniums have made one, is divided today and many there are on the other side of the boundary who would much rather be on this side. To them we send a word of cheer and assurance and ask them not to give way to panic or despair but to live with faith and courage in peace with their neighbours and fulfil the duties of loyal citizenship and thus win their rightful place. We

send our greetings to the new Dominion which is being established today there and wish it the best luck in its great work of governing that region and making all its citizens happy and prosperous. We feel assured that they all will be treated fairly and justly without any distinction or discrimination. Let us hope and pray that the day will come when even those who have insisted upon and brought about this division will realise India's essential oneness and we shall be united once again. We must realise however that this can be brought about not by force but by largeheartedness and co-operation and by so managing our affairs on this side as to attract those who have parted. It may appear to be a dream but it is no more fantastic a dream than that of those who wanted a division and may well be realised even sooner than we dare hope for today.

4. More than a day of rejoicing it is a day of dedication for all of us to build the India of our dreams. Let us turn our eyes away from the past and fix our gaze on the future. We have no quarrel with other nations and countries and let us hope no one will pick a quarrel with us. By history and tradition we are a peaceful people and India wants to be at peace with the world. India's Empire outside her own borders has been of a different kind from all other Empires. India's conquests have been the conquests of spirit which did not impose heavy chains of slavery, whether of iron or of gold, on others but tied other lands and other peoples to her with the more enduring ties of golden silk—of culture and civilisation, of religion and knowledge (gyan). We shall follow that same tradition and shall have no ambition save that of contributing our little mite to the building of peace and freedom in a war-distracted world by holding aloft the banner under which we have marched to victory and placing in a practical manner in the hands of the world the great weapon of Non-violence which has achieved this unique result. India has a great part to play. There is something in her life and culture which has enabled her to survive the onslaughts of time and today we witness a new birth full of promise, if only we prove ourselves true to our ideals.

5. Let us resolve to create conditions in this country when every individual will be free and provided with the wherewithal to develop and rise to his fullest stature, when poverty and squalor and ignorance and ill-health will have been vanished, when the distinction between high and low, between rich and poor, will have disappeared, when religion will not only be professed and preached and practised freely but will have become a cementing force for binding man to man and not serve as a disturbing and disrupting force dividing and separating, when untouchability will have been forgotten like an unpleasant night dream, when exploitation of man by man will have ceased, when facilities and special arrangements will have been provided for the adidmjatids of India and for all others who are backward, to enable them to catch up to others and when this land will have not only enough food to feed its teeming millions but will once again have become a land flowing with rivers of milk, when men and women will be laughing and working for all they are worth in fields and factories, when every cottage and hamlet will be humming with the sweet music of village handicrafts and maids will be busy with them and singing to their tune—when the sun and the moon will be shining on happy homes and loving faces.

6. To bring all this about we need all the idealism and sacrifice, all the intelligence and diligence, all the determination and the power of organisation that we can muster. We have many parties and groups with differing ideals and ideologies. They are all trying to convert the country to their own ideologies and to mould the constitution and the administration to suit their own view point. While they have the right to do so the country and the nation have the right to demand loyalty from them. All must realise that what is needed most today is a great constructive effort—not strife, hard solid work— not argumentation and let us hope that all will be prepared to make their contribution. We want the peasant to grow more food, we want the workers to produce more goods, we want our industrialists to use their intelligence, tact and resourcefulness for the common good. To all we must assure conditions of decent and healthy life and opportunities for self-improvement and self-realisation.

7. Not only have the people to dedicate themselves to this great task that lies ahead but those who have so far been playing the role of rulers and regulators of the lives of our men and women have to assume the role of servants. Our army has won undying glory in distant lands for its bravery and great fighting qualities. Our soldiers, sailors and airmen have to realise that they now form a national army on whom devolves the duty not only of defend-

ing the freedom which we have won but also to help in a constructive way in building up a new life. There is no place in the armed forces of our country which is not open to our people, and what is more they are required to take the highest places as soon as they can so that they may take full charge of our defences. Our public servants in various departments of Government have to shed their role as rulers and have to become true servants of the people that their compeers are in all free countries. The people and the Government on their side have to give them their trust and assure them conditions of service in keeping with the lives of the people in whose midst they have to live and serve.

8. We welcome the Indian States which have acceded to India and to their people we offer our hands of comradeship. To the princes and the rulers of the States we say that we have no designs against them. We trust they will follow the example of the King of England and become constitutional rulers. They would do well to take as their model the British monarchical system which has stood the shock of two successive world wars when so many other monarchies in Europe have toppled down.

9. To Indians settled abroad in British Colonies and elsewhere we send our good wishes and assurance of our abiding interest in their welfare. To our minorities we give the assurance that they will receive fair and just treatment and their rights will be respected and protected.

10. One of the great tasks which we have in hand is to complete the constitution under which not only will freedom and liberty be assured to each and all but which will enable us to achieve and attain and enjoy its fulfilment and its fruits. We must accomplish this task as soon as possible so that we may begin to live and work under a constitution of our own making, of which we may all be proud, and which it may become our pride and privilege to defend and to preserve to the lasting good of our people and for the service of mankind. In framing that constitution we shall naturally draw upon the experience and knowledge of other countries and nations no less than on our own traditions and surroundings and may have at times to disregard the lines drawn by recent history and lay down new boundary lines not only of Provinces but also of distribution of powers and functions. Our ideal is to have a constitution that will enable the people's will to be expressed and enforced and that will not only secure liberty to the individual but also reconcile and make it subservient to the common good.

11. We have up to now been taking a pledge to achieve freedom and to undergo all sufferings and sacrifices for it. Time has come when we have to take a pledge of another kind. Let no one imagine that the time for work and sacrifice is gone and the time for enjoying the fruits thereof has come. Let us realise that the demand on our enthusiasm and capacity for unselfish work in the future will be as great as, if not greater than, what it has ever been before. We have, therefore, to dedicate ourselves once again to the great cause that beckons us. The task is great, the times are propitious. Let us pray that we may have the strength, the wisdom and the courage to fulfil it.

LORD MOUNTBATTEN'S ADDRESS

Lord Mountbatten whose sincerity, speed and skill had been a great factor in bringing this the greatest moment in India's modern history to this date also delivered an address. He read a message of good-will from His Majesty the King to the new dominion of India. Recounting the history of recent negotiations for Indian Freedom, Lord Mountbatten paid a homage to the practical capacity for compromise of the leaders of the country. He reminded that from this day he was there as the servant of the Indian people, having agreed to serve as the first Governor of free India on the invitation of the peoples' representatives.

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE RIOTS AND GANDHIJI

They gather in their prayer halls in a pious garb,
They call their soldiers,
Kill, kill, they shout;
In their roaring mingles the music of their hymns,
While the Son of Man in His agony prays, O God
Fling, fling away this cup filled with the
bitterest poison. . .



The historic occasion in the Constituent Assembly lacked the central figure, the father of the Freedom that was celebrated in this way. On being invited to be at Delhi at this time, Gandhiji had pleaded his pre-occupation at Noakhali with a cryptic remark that gave his estimate of the situation. "Delhi is far off: Noakhali is near", he had said.

Earlier, when the political settlement was keeping our leaders in feverish activity, he had gone into this far off corner of rural Bengal and spent months in going from house to house, from village to village, bringing comfort, courage and peace to this stricken land. The overshadowing picture in the country had already become of the communal strife and bloodshed. The Swaraj of his dreams seemed far off. Disruption and moral degradation was all round him.

There were greater killing at Calcutta and later in Bihar. But Calcutta had evenly matched communities and after the first day, retaliation had brought realisation and the city settled down into a sullen truce with occasional incidents. In Bihar Gandhiji's threat to fast unto death and the energetic steps of the Government had stopped the riots very quickly. At Noakhali, even after the first outbreak a cool policy of terrorisation, abduction and forcible conversion was going on against a small and helpless minority, in which the ignorant muslim village population was only a pawn. Noakhali thus became another centre of a great experiment. In this dangerously inflamed area Gandhiji went about, staying in Muslim houses, treking from place to place. In the special batch of his chosen companions and workers there were several young women, Sushila Nair, his grand daughter and daughter-in-law, Sucheta and a Muslim lady, Bhen Amtul Salam. These ladies went alone from house to house. Amtual came from a distinguished Muslim family, was the sister of an ex-Chief Justice and relative of Nawab of Chhatari. She was an ashramite and a devout Muslim. She underwent a long fast at Noakhali to win over the heart of her co-religionists for humanity and justice and love.

Dr. Pattabhi describes the role of Gandhiji in Noakhali as follows:

"In all this harrowing tale of woe, of families wiped out, villages burnt, women raped, abducted and forcibly married, in this tragedy which has outdone the tragedies of history, the notorious Armenian massacres of old, the Black and Tan pogroms of Ireland, and the more recent slaughter of Jews in Germany, there remains but one bright spot, one shining light, one solitary individual, marching alone and unfriended, melancholy and slow throughout the marshes of East Bengal, witnessing forborn houses by the thousand and forsaken families by the million, carrying however with him the torch of hope and peace, exhorting people to shed fear and learn to believe, dwelling upon the essential good in human nature and the ultimate triumph of love over hatred, holding aloft the torch of Truth

in the midst of untruth, of light in the midst of darkness and of life in the midst of death"

(Pattabhi's "History of Congress", Vol. II)

But while Gandhiji's work at Noakhali was having a sobering effect in Bengal, Bihar and U. P., it was considered by the League as a sabotage of its doctrine of hatred and two nations. On the day when Direct Action had been inaugurated at the Conference of League Legislators at Delhi, it was not only Suhrawardy who had outlined a programme of what later happened at Calcutta. There were Mr. Feroz Khan Noon and Mr. Ghazanfar Ali, who had prophesied happenings that would put the memory of Changiz and Qathi Khan into shade. These prophecies were soon realised in the districts of these leaders. The Rawalpindi and Multan District had been the recruiting ground of the British Indian army, with most backward, pir-ridden fanatical and ignorant people. Many of them ex-service men had arms and the war had brutalised them even more. Across the border were the backward frontier districts, ever ready for loot and rapine. The minority communities, Sikhs and Hindus were either in the towns or in isolated small pockets and had lived peacefully for generations with their neighbours. Then suddenly these villages found themselves surrounded by thousands of armed gangs of marauders. The villages were looted, and burnt; men, women and children maimed and killed, women abducted and dishonoured. Many women jumped into wells or burnt themselves and men shot their own families to save them from torture and dishonour worse than death. Changiz and Qathi Khan would blush in their graves if their names were associated with such doings as were enacted at Rawalpindi and Multan. These things went on with impunity and photographs published later in the press, taken from air, showed columns of armed men with rifles, some with camels and horses carrying their booty swarming the countryside below. The 'shots', however were only by a camera. Military aid reached the surviving villages but later. The tales of horror, that were carried by those who escaped, kindled a fire that was later to blaze into a conflagration.

These ghastly happenings were taking place when the League had already joined the Interim Government at the Centre. The League was playing a double role. While on the one hand it openly preached violence and jehad against Hindus and Sikhs, at the same time it held office in the provinces and at the centre controlling police and justice. On being asked his opinion about this Gandhiji had condemned this grave anomaly. "It is so bad that it cannot last long", he had said.

In fact it was the horror of this fratricidal war and the failure of the experiment of a composite Government at the centre that ultimately induced the Congress leaders to accept Mountbatten Plan with severing of some parts, but lesser parts than Jinnah's original demand. Similar earlier offer by Rajaji's formula had been turned down by Jinnah as a "truncated and moth eaten" Pakistan.

Gandhiji had taken up a stand against vivisection, but recognised that alternative was revolution, or a civil war on one side and a new fight with the British who supported the League demand. The country, its press and leaders of all schools were taken by surprise and in the majority expressed disapproval and dismay at the acceptance by the Congress of a scheme of division. In the A. I. C. C. meeting, however there was scarcely any opposition excepting by the valiant fight put up by Sri Purshotam Das Tandon. Nehru had explained that the alternative was murder. It was not a question of being afraid of being killed, but the killing on both sides was of your own people. Sardar Patel told how impossible the position had become in the Government by the obstruction policy of Muslim services. He later expressed that it was the decision to amputate a limb rather than allow the poison to affect the whole body. They all told later, as Rajendra Babu had expressed at the time, their conviction that the decision would restore goodwill and that with it and the force of economic and other factors there would be a reunion at an early date.

The poison, it would seem, had become too deep and wide spread and the acceptance of Pakistan, instead of having a sobering effect and bringing peace, unleashed the forces that League had been rearing and a fast-developing story of bloodshed, hatred and lawlessness overshadowed the parts that were feeling the glow of the coming Pakistan. Only history will judge how far the Congress leaders were right and how far wrong. Perhaps the terrible tragedy that happened later could have been avoided in large part. Kripalaniji later admitted that politicians were not astrologers.

It would also seem that the evil star of India had not ceased to have its baneful influence even while it was setting. The Punjab Government had always the worst type of die-hard civilian officers. They must have found it hard to reconcile themselves to this throwing away of the Empire. We had occasion to see the intrigues of some of the Governors to tip the balance in favour of the League. Khizar had been unsaddled in the Punjab and under the curtain of Sec. 93, sinister things had been happening in the Punjab. The Muslim police and officers had had a free hand inspite of various protests of the minority community. The wealthiest part of Lahore, the heart of its business quarter, inside Shahalmi Gate, was looted and burnt during curfew hours with the help of the police and a Muslim magistrate. According to popular belief, later expressed in a pamphlet by Dhanwantri, a well-known and experienced public worker of the Punjab, the hidden official hand in spreading of riots was clearly discernable and the worst affected areas were those with European District Officers.

With the opening of the Boundary Commission these communal riots reached another phase. The Sikhs had been hit the hardest both in the League-sponsored atrocities in which the Sikhs were specially victimised and in the division in the Punjab. Hopes were held by Sikhs of more justice being done, on the basis of the 'Other Factors' clause but these were sadly belied in the Boundary award. The patience of the Sikhs was completely exhausted. The initiative for a new breakout in the Amritsar district seem to have come from the Sikhs. This started a train of incidents of increasing ferocity and magnitude till these merged into an all-out war of one community against the other. Some unspeakable horrors were committed against women by both sides. The number of people massacred is not known yet, but must be very heavy. The Boundary Force seem to have added to the strife by taking sides. Some of the States, like Bhawalpur, Patiala, Kapurthala, Bharatpur and Alwar took part, it would seem in this communal war. Thus on the threshold of our freedom a mounting crisis of frenzy and madness was spreading devastation in the Punjab and for the Sikh and Hindu population of N.W.F.P., Baluchistan and Sindh. Loot and arson, abduction and forcible conversion were going on a mass scale. Soon began a two way trek of miserable, terror-stricken men and women from one part of the country to the other. Many dropped on the roadside out of hunger and exhaustion. Many were killed or abducted on the way. In long straggling trails of pedestrians, cattle, bullock-carts dragging its weary course, uprooted from their ancestoral homes, bereft of lands, houses and all belongings, living in momentary terror of maraunding bands, people began to move from the two directions to establish Mr. Jinnahs dream of two nations. There were 30 lakhs of Hindus and Sikhs in the west Punjab and 44 lakhs of Muslims in the east Punjab. Many million people were thus forced to leave their homes, mostly with bare clothes on their backs, to seek shelter in refugee camps that were now springing up, and live on such charity as was available.

This 'Crisis in India's Soul' as Nehru put, it, had almost synchronised with August 15th, though the peak was to come a few days later. Thus we came to live the most humiliating chapter in Indias long history on the eve of her greatest glory. The celebrations were naturally subdued and Gandhiji did not feel any jubilation.

But as it happened the only place that celebrated the 15th of August with a sincerely felt joy and abandonment was Calcutta where Gandhiji had decided to pass the historic night of this date.

Ever since the 16th of August a year earlier, the great city had been in the grip of a communal situation that has settled down as a chronic ailment, paralysing the life and work, dividing it into two mutually-banned areas—Pakistan and Hindustan; and one could walk from one into the other with most chances of being stabbed. There were frequent curfews. The 15th of August was therefore awaited with grave apprehension specially by the Muslims who no longer had a partisan police and Government to back them. When Gandhiji was passing Calcutta with his intention to pass 15th August at Noakhali, Mr. Suhrawardy and other Muslim leaders asked him to stay at Calcutta to bring peace to this stricken city. Gandhiji agreed promptly and established himself in a Muslim house in one of the worst affected area. His campaign began at once. He visited the plague spots, talked to people and spoke to mammoth gatherings in his prayer meetings. These meetings were held daily at different parts of the city. Peace processions were soon organised of men and women, Hindus and Muslims. Opposition of the Hindu Sabha leaders to such a move was won over and the

stage was set for what was coming on the 15th August.

But what actually transpired on the night of the 14th and the glorious dawn of the 15th August was something like a miracle. As if by magic the year long tention and animosity had disappeared and a mighty, emotional upsurge of Hindu Muslim fraternisation swept the city from end to end. The city had been gaily decorated with flags festoons and arches, in which the Muslim mohallas participated equally with the Hindus. The streets was a seething mass of hilarious crowds, and resounded with Jai Hind and a strange new cry 'Hindu Muslim Ek Ho'. It was a touching scene to witness. Old and young Muslims, poor people would come, at first shy to accost you with a Jai Hind and then mingle in one of the groups of Hindu Muslim parties who went round on crowded buses, trams and trucks. The leaders were also taken by surprise by this sudden phenomenon and when the news was conveyed to Gandhiji a smile of joy lit up his face. His deep anguish at the suffering of the people, Hindu and Muslims on the dusty Punjab roads, and in improvised shelters, must have been forgotten for this moment. Gandhiji celebrated the 15th of August, by fasting and praying in which Mr. Suhrawardy had kept him company.

The dawn of the 15th August in Calcutta will live in one's memory with its Prabhat Pheris of young men and girls, with moving and solemn melodies. For a week the artistic talent of Bengal blossomed in a riot of new song, poetry and drama. Bengal had earned its right to celebrate our freedom.

On a brief recrudence of trouble in Calcutta, Gandhiji had put a stop to it by starting a fast unto death.

Gandhiji left Calcutta on his way to the unhappy land of Punjab. But the stream of the burning scorching lava of this eruption had now reached Delhi and there were serious riots. Gandhiji had to stop at Delhi. Daily and hourly, he has been working with every ounce of his energy to restore peace, save the Muslim minority, from terror and forcible expulsion from this ancient city, bringing comfort to the sufferers, restoring the morale of the disrupted families and society of the huge new class that has sprung up—the refugees. Some of us are reminded of his earlier successful effort to turn a misfortune to good after the Bihar Earthquake.

This 'human earthquake', as Nehru has called it, had affected not only those who were its victims directly, but had shaken all our cherished ideals and the structure of our national life to its foundations. We seemed to have come against a dead wall at the very gates of our freedom. Only Gandhiji remained our guide at such a time.

"Freedom came to us and it came within a minimum of violence. But immediately after, we had to wade through oceans of blood and tears. Worse than the blood and tears was the shame and disgrace that accompanied them. Where were our values and standards then, where was our old culture, our humanism and spirituality and all that India had stood for in the past? Suddenly darkness descended upon this land and madness seized the people.

"Fear and hatred blinded our minds and all the restraints which civilization imposes were swept away. Horror piled on horror and a sudden emptiness seized us at the brute savagery of human beings. The lights seemed all to go out; not all, for a few still flickered in the raging tempest. We sorrowed for the dead and the dying and for those whose suffering was greater than that of death. We sorrowed even more for India, our common mother, for whose freedom we had laboured these long years.

"One Bright Flame"

"The lights seemed to go out but one bright flame continued to burn and shed its light on the surrounding gloom and, looking at that pure flame, strength and hope returned to us and we felt that whatever momentary disaster might overwhelm our people, there was the spirit of India strong and unsullied, rising above the turmoil of the present and not caring for the petty exigencies of the day.

"How many of you realise what it has meant to India to have the presence of Mahatma Gandhi during these months? We all know of his magnificent services to India and to freedom during the past half-century and more. But no service could have

been greater than what he has performed during the past four months when, in a dissolving world, he has been like a rock of purpose and a lighthouse of truth, and his firm, low voice has risen above the clamours of the multitude, pointing out the path of rightful endeavour." (Nehru)

> I shall work for an India in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country, in whose making they have an effective voice, an India in which there shall be no high class and low class of people, an India in which all communities shall live in perfect harmony There can be no room in such India for the curse of untouchability or the curse of intoxicating drinks and drugs Women will enjoy the same rights as men This is the India of my dreams.
>
> M. K. GANDHI.



BOOK IX

LOOKING INTO THE DAWN



CHAPTER XXXVIII

Bright luminous Dawn! rose-red, radiant rejoicing!
Show the traveller his road; the cattle their pasture new;
Rouse the beasts of the Earth to their truthful myriad voicing,
Leader of lightful days! softening the soil with dew.
Wide-expanded Dawn! Open the gates of the morning;
Waken the singing birds! Guide thou the truthful light
To uttermost shade of the shadow, for, see you! the dawning
Is born, white-shining, out of the gloom of the night.

(Rigveda)

"O lovely dawn of freedom that breaks in gold and purple over the ancient capital of 'Prithiraj', O splendid flag of new born India to be unfurled on the morrow over the Red Fort of Shahjehan. We pay you the homage of our dedicated heart and hands and pledge ourselves to translate into glorious deeds the dreams that were our share and inspiration in the long darkness of our bondage".

(Sarojini's Greetings to New Dawn, Aug. 14-15)

THE 15TH OF AUGUST, 1947

August 15th, 1947 is the birthday of free India. It marks for her the end of an old era, the beginning of a new age. But we can also make it by our life and acts as a free nation an important date in a new age opening for the whole world, for the political, social, cultural and spiritual future of humanity.

August 15th is my own birthday and it is naturally gratifying to me that it should have assumed this vast significance. I take this coincidence, not as a fortuitous accident, but as the sanction and seal of the Divine Force that guides my steps on the work with which I began life, the beginning of its full fruition. Indeed, on this day I can watch almost all the world-movements which I hoped to see fulfilled in my lifetime, though then they looked like impracticable dreams, arriving at fruition or on their way to achievement. In all these movements free India may well play a large part and take a leading position.

The first of these dreams was a revoutionary movement which would create a free and united India. India today is free but she has not achieved unity. At one moment it almost seemed as if in the very act of liberation she would fall back into the chaos of separate States which preceded the British conquest. But fortunately it now seems probable that this danger will be averted and a large and powerful, though not yet a complete union will be established. Also, the wisely drastic policy of the Constituent Assembly has made it probable that the problem of the depressed classes will be solved without schism or fissure. But the old communal division into Hindus and Muslims seems now to have hardened into a permanent political division of the country. It is to be hoped that this settled fact will not be accepted as settled for ever or as anything more than a temporary expedient. For if it lasts, India may be seriously weakened, even crippled: civil strife may remain always possible, possible even a new invasion and foreign conquest. India's internal development and prosperity may be impeded, her position among the nations weakened, her destiny impaired or even frustrated. This must not be; the partition must go. Let us hope that that may come about naturally, by an increasing recognition of the necessity not only of peace and concord but of common action, by the practice of common action and the creation of means for that purpose. In this way unity may finally come about under whatever form—the exact form may have a pragmatic but not a fundamental importance. But by whatever means, in whatever way, the division must go; unity must and will be achieved, for it is necessary for the greatness of India's future.

Another dream was for the resurgence and liberation of the peoples of Asia and her return to her great role in the progress of human civilisation. Asia has arisen; large parts are now quite free or are at this moment being liberated: its other still subject or partly subject parts are moving through whatever struggles towards freedom. Only a little has to be done and that will be done today or tomorrow. There India has her part to play and has begun to play it with an energy and ability which already indicate the measure of her possibilities and the place she can take in the council of the nations.

The third dream was a world-union forming the outer basis of a fairer, brighter and nobler life for all mankind. That unification of the human world is under way; there is an imperfect initiation organised but struggling against tremendous difficulties. But the momentum is there and it must inevitably increase and conquer. Here too India has begun

to play a prominent part and, if she can develop that larger statesmanship which is not limited by the present facts and immediate possibilities but looks into the future and brings it nearer, her presence may make all the difference between a slow and timid and a bold and swift development. A catastrophe may intervene and interrupt or destroy what is being done, but even then the final result is sure. For unification is a necessity of Nature, an inevitable movement. Its necessity for the nations is also clear, for without it the freedom of the small nations may be at any moment in peril and the life even of the large and powerful nations insecure. The unification is therefore to the interests of all, and only human imbecility and stupid selfishness can prevent it ; but these cannot stand for ever against the necessity of Nature and the Divine Will. But an outward basis is not enough ; there mustt grow up an international spirit and outlook, international forms and institutions must appear, perhaps such developments as dual or multilateral citizenship, willed interchange or voluntary fusion of cultures. Nationalism will have fulfilled itself and lost its militancy and would no longer find these things incompatible with self-preservation and the integrality of its outlook. A new spirit of oneness will take hold of the human race.

Another dream, the spiritual gift of India to the world has already begun. India's spirituality is entering Europe and America in an ever increasing measure. That movement will grow ; amid the disasters of the time more and more eyes are turning towards her with hope and there is even an increasing resort not only to her teachings, but to her psychic and spiritual practice.

The final dream was a step in evolution which would raise man to a higher and larger consciousness and begin the solution of the problems which have perplexed and vexed him since he first began to think and to dream of individual perfection and a perfect society. This is still a personal hope and an idea, an ideal which has begun to take hold both in India and in the West on forward-looking minds. The difficulties in the way are more formidable than in any other field of endeavour, but difficulties were made to be overcome and if the Supreme Will is there, they will be overcome. Here too, if this evolution is to take place, since it must proceed through a growth of the spirit and the inner consciousness, the initiative can come from India and, although the scope must be universal, the central movement may be hers.

Such is the content which I put into this date of India's liberation ; whether or how far this hope will be justified depends upon the new and free India.

SRI AUROBINDO

A NEW STAR RISES IN THE EAST

Pt. Nehru's Message to the Nation

The appointed Day has come—the day appointed by destiny, and India stands forth again after long slumber and struggle, awake, vital, free and independent. The Past clings on to us still in some measure and we have to do much before we redeem the pledges we have so often taken. Yet the turning point is past, history begins anew for us, the history which we shall live and act as others will write about.

It is a fateful moment for us in India, for all Asia and for the world. A new star rises, the star of freedom in the East, a new hope comes into being, a vision long cherished materialises. May the star never set and that hope never be betrayed.

We rejoice in that freedom, even though clouds surround us, and many of our people are sorrow-stricken and difficult problems encompass us. But freedom brings responsibilities and burdens and we have to face them in the spirit of a free and disciplined people.

On this day our first thoughts go to the Architect of this freedom, the Father of our Nation who, embodying the old spirit of India, held aloft the torch of freedom and lighted up the darkness that surrounded us. We have often been unworthy followers of his and have strayed from his message, but not only we but succeeding generations will remember this message and bear the imprint in their hearts of this great son of India, magnificent in his faith and strength and courage and humility. We shall never allow that torch of freedom to be blown out however high the wind or stormy the tempest.

Our next thoughts must be of the unknown volunteers and soldiers of freedom who, without praise or reward, have served India even unto death.

We think also of our brothers and sisters who have been cut off from us by political boundaries and who unhappily cannot share at present in the freedom that has come. They are of us and will remain of us whatever may happen, and we shall be sharers in their good and ill fortune alike.

The future beckons to us whither do we go and what shall be our endeavour? To bring freedom and opportunity to the common man, to the peasants and workers of India. To fight and end poverty and ignorance and diseases. To build up a prosperous, democratic and progressive nation, and to create social, economic and political institutions which will ensure justice and fullness of life to every man and woman.

We have hard work ahead. There is no resting for any one of us till we redeem our pledge in full, till we make all the people of India what destiny intended them to be. We are citizens of a great country, on the verge of bold advance, and we have to live up to that high standard. All of us to whatever religion we may belong are equally the children of India with equal rights, privileges and obligations. We cannot encourage communalism or narrow-mindedness, for no nation can be great whose people are narrow in thought or in action.

To the nations and people of the world we send greetings and pledge ourselves to co-operate with them in furthering peace, freedom and democracy. And to India our much-loved mother-land, the ancient, the eternal and the ever-new, we pay our reverent homage and we bind ourselves afresh to her service.

JAI HIND



CHAPTER XXXIX

INDIAN RE-CONSTRUCTION PLANS

I. INDIA'S ECONOMIC SYSTEM

Dr Radhakumud Mookerji, M.A., Ph.D.

At the dawn of a new era of reconstruction, it becomes useful to look at the foundations and re-examine briefly the economic system which has been evolved in India through the ages as the outcome of both her physical and social conditions.

In spite of the introduction of Western modern civilization to India under the auspices of British rule, India has remained as ever mainly the land of villages. According to the last Census, India is the land of about 700,000 villages as against only 2,703 towns which can hardly be called towns in the Western sense of the term, because they have only 5,000 people and more each. India counts only about 40 cities which have more than a population of 100,000 and more each.

Thus India is primarily an agricultural country. She is very much handicapped by a very low level of illiteracy. Less than one per cent of her population is English literate, while general literacy is only about 12·2 per cent.

About 80 per cent of India's millions, totalling about 300 millions, are on land, with an average holding of about ½ acres per head and 3 acres per family.

The following are India's main agriculture Crops:—

1. Rice, comprising	29%	of total	world	production		
2. Wheat,	,,	7%	,,	,,	,,	,,
3. Sugar,	,,	18%	,,	,,	,,	,,
4. Cotton,	,,	15%	,,	,,	,,	,,
5. Jute,	,,	98%	,,	,,	,,	,,
6. Tea,	,,	23%	,,	,,	,,	,,

7. Tobacco, coffee, rubber, peanuts, together 22%.

India is one of the world's largest producers of hides.

It will be seen from the above list of India's agricultural crops that, while India may run short of food like rice or wheat, she may make it up by buying her import of required food by export of some of her commercial crops, especially Jute.

The recently appointed Agricultural Commission known as the Bengal Land Revenue Commission (of which I happened to be a member) has found by elaborate investigations of rural problems all over India the somewhat distressing fact that India's agricultural millions have no work for themselves for about half the year during the off-seasons of Agriculture. The only remedy to this difficult situation is that work should be provided for them in their village homes by means of a planned program of handicrafts which they may ply to profit in their cottages, when they are thrown out of work.

The Nation in India still lives in the Village and in the Cottage.

Her large and heavy industries, few as they are, absorb only a very small percentage of her total population, a percentage which is moreover on the decline. India will take long to industrialize herself in the Western sense of the term. Till then means must be found to feed her starving millions by bringing work to them when they go out of work, and employing them profitably in their own village homes to which they are bound by strong social ties. Rural labour in India is not mobile enough.

India has thus been inevitably a country of small holdings but that does not mean that she has been exclusively an agricultural country.

On the contrary, India's historic and traditional economic system has been a balanced development of agriculture and handicrafts.

In the remote pre-mechanical ages, she had been a large exporter of her manufactures. Mommsen has described how by her trade in Muslins with the Roman Empire in the early centuries of the Christian era, she was draining that empire annually of several millions of its gold sesterces. She also exported spices, scents, and perfumes, pearls and precious stones, cottons and textiles. She produced the steel that made the Damascus Blade. The Iron Pillar of Delhi of about 400 A.D. is a standing monument of her metallurgical skill, as the Asokan Monolithic Pillar of 250 B.C. of a height of 50 feet is a masterpiece of her architectural achievement. It still stands four square to the winds and braved the Bihar earthquake of 1935. Similar later Muslim monuments are Kuth-Minar, Taj, and the like.

It cannot, however, be denied that through the ages India has been built up as a predominantly rural and agricultural civilization. She thought out her best and highest in her woods and hermitages as recorded in her age-old Vedic, Sanskrit, and Pali literature, for the study of which the U. S. A. Universities maintain richly endowed Chairs.

She cannot surrender her traditional ideals of thought and life, her culture and civilization to modern wholesale methods of materialism and mechanization, aiming at vast mass production, without reference to its reactions on life and the individual's personality. India still believes in the possibilities of "Three Acres and a Cow", in small farming, in self-sufficient homesteads as the basis of the good life, in agriculture and dairy-farming, coupled with home industries like Spinning and Weaving.

That is the Gandhian Plan for which India and the Congress stand. But the system has its broader aspects. It may be pointed out that mere economic efficiency is not the only standard by which small farming and peasant proprietorship are to be judged in India. Small farming has been the established profession in India through the milleniums and does not count as a mere convenient field of investment for its incomes and returns. The system keeps alive in India various practices of agricultural co-operation in sowing, harvesting, and irrigation and contributes an element of social stability and cohesion to India's culture. Very few countries in the world have produced an enduring institution like the Indian village Community as the vehicle of a vast rural and peasant democracy that has stood like the rock of ages against the waves of political unrest and revolutions. The continuance of these Indian village republics (anticipating the Soviets) rests on *petits* agriculture and proprietorship and on the practices and habits of spontaneous agricultural co-operation and rural administration. Nor should peasant farming in India be considered inefficient from the point of view of food production when it feeds a heavy population crowded on land. An Indian Economist by his special researches has discovered that 100 acres can support by their output of calories 100 to 150 persons in India as against about half that number in Western Europe. To relieve some of the population pressure on soil, village economy becomes diversified within its limits, with the peasant family labour distributed among fields, dairies, and cottage industries, maintaining the employment of men, women and children in the family milieu as far as possible. Thus the shift from high to low cost agricultural production is not quite applicable to Indian conditions. India's agricultural economy is to be viewed not as an artificial changeable system but is like a natural formation, an integral part of a larger social system in which it is rooted. That is why the progressive Government of Madras has stood boldly for the reconstruction of India's rural life and economy on traditional lines by laying an embargo on the starting of new textile mills so as to give scope to

the village handicrafts of spinning and weaving in accordance with the Gandhian Plan.

The Gandhian Plan, however, does not shut out large-scale industry where it is indispensable. Even Agriculture needs mechanization in certain fields, such as those of reclamation of waste lands by use of Tractors and other heavy machinery. But such large-scale and costly agricultural operations must be the concern of the State. It is for the State to bring to Indian Agriculture the technique, methods, and mechanism of large and collectivist farming, but in the domain of private agricultural enterprise which concerns the fortunes of the vast majority of India's population, the State must reckon with and foster small farming and peasant proprietorship. Small farming has to be made more scientific, modern and mechanized to some extent. It demands of the State, supply of water for irrigation, of up-to-date seeds, manures, implements, fertilizers, health and the educational programs and a variety of social services to raise the level and beauty of life, so that every village in India may be revived as a centre of Life and Light and reconstructed as a self-governing Corporation or republic, as it has been through the ages up to the 18th Century till the onrush of a centralized government swept it away.

The coming Indian Constitution is to be based on the village as the unit of self-government by the exercise of which its atrophied social tissues may be revived so as to restore the decadent body politic to its normal health and activity.

Thus small farming in India demands improvement by the application of modern and scientific methods which have been so largely denied to it. For this, the proposed international organisation like the F. A. O. will be most helpful by supplying India with the aids to Agriculture, not merely machinery but also technical talent that may be required to revitalise small farming and make it up-to-date. The International Monetary and Rehabilitation Funds with which India has associated herself may also come to the aid of her Agriculture by financing some of her hydro-electric and irrigation schemes, by which the water for this cultivation will be made available to the small peasant where and when he needs it.

A most fruitful and appropriate method for improving small farming would be to base it as far as possible on the principle of co-operation. It is through the co-operative pattern of agricultural organization and what is known as the Multiple-Purpose Society, rather than a thorough-going system of large-scale collectivist and mechanized farming that the small peasant proprietor and his agriculture can be rehabilitated and rescued from the invasion of the forces of capitalistic farming of the West, marked by relatively lower costs of agricultural production, but such reduced costs being achieved at the sacrifice of certain essential social values for which India stands. India has always felt that Man is more important than Machine.

In regard to the financing of India's economic and social plans and programs, it may be pointed out that a vast source of India's credit lies in her sterling assets. About 5,400 million dollars made up this credit at the outbreak of the last war. Of this amount 1,350 million dollars have been since appropriated by the U. K. Government to liquidate India's sterling debt. India's frozen sterling assets now amount to about 4,000 million dollars, with a monthly increase of about 200 million dollars. It is hoped that India will be able to draw upon this reserve of gold to finance her agricultural and industrial developments.





II. A PLAN FOR RURAL INDIA

J. C. Kumarappa

The basic cause of food shortage is the departure from the village-economy of self-sufficiency. Our custom has been to grow in every village material to meet all its needs, and to afford a reserve for a year or two in cereals. The advent of money economy broke through this rampart of safety. Even the growing of cereals had become a money crop. Farmers sold their food material and hoarded their notes which could not commend foreign market in grains with the result that now we face famines every year. The only remedy is to resort to balanced cultivation of land.

Every village should determine what food materials, fodder and other necessaries like cotton and oil seeds it requires and concentrate its production on these, not for the exchange market, but for its own use. Every plot of ground must be earmarked for growing a particular crop, not according to the whims of the farmer but according to the dictates of the needs of the village, as determined by its council or Government, which will authorise such use of the land by a system of careful licensing.

The food question, which has assumed serious proportion now, does not promise an immediate solution. The problem is two-fold. Immediately, there is a calories shortage and there is also the long standing shortage of protective foods. The first problem may find a solution but the second one is going to present difficulties.

It is ordinarily presumed that an acre of land provides more calories through the production of grains than through any other food. But apart from the question of calories, the grains are very poor suppliers of protective food factors. Therefore, if we aim at getting these factors from cereals only, huge quantities of grains will be required. On the other hand, if the grains are substituted and supplemented by foods like fruits and vegetables, milk and its products, gur, nuts and oilseeds, etc., the protective food factors required to make up a balanced diet may be obtained through lesser quantities of these types of food than through grains alone. Even the supply of calories per acre is greater in the case of gur and of the root vegetables like potato then in the case of cereal grains. Thus a balanced diet may be a double blessing and may offer the solution to our problem. It reduces the per capita requirements of land and at the same time it supplies the body with all its requirements in their correct proportions so as to keep it fit and healthy. It is calculated that the per capita land available in India, at present, for food cultivation comes to about 0·7 acre. This very land, which is found to be too inadequate to meet our requirements in food according to the present distribution of cultivation, becomes sufficient in the re-ordered system of agriculture. In this manner the land of the locality should be so distributed for the purpose of growing crops as to provide its popu-

lation with all the needed materials for a balanced diet, clothing and all primary necessities. This aspect of the question should be thoroughly investigated and a definite plan chalked out and enforced by licensing farmers to grow only certain crops on their lands. The following table shows land distribution for balanced cultivation for a population of one lakh.

Per Lakh of Population

Diet	Ozs. per day	Calories	lbs. per annum	Land required (in acres)	For seed estate 15% extra	Total	Percentage and distribution
I							
Cereals	16	1600	365·00	43,400	6,510	49,910	65·2
Pulses	2	210	45·60	5,400	810	6,210	8·0
Gur	2	200	45·60	1,200	180	1,380	1·8
Nuts	1	255	22·80	2,600	390	2,990	8·4
Oil	½	255	11·40	3,000	450	3,450	
Ghee	½	—	11·40	—	—	—	—
Milk	12	240	273·75	—	—	—	—
Vegetables	8	48	182·50	1,600	240	1,840	2·4
Potatoes, Tubers	4	100	91·25	1,000	150	1,150	1·5
Fruits	4	52	91·25	900	135	1,035	1·4
II							
Cotton	—	...	12·50	7,500	1,125	8,625	11·3
Total		2860		66,600	9,990	76,590	100·0

This table provides for a balanced vegetarian diet yielding 2860 calories per day for the average person and allows for the growing of cotton for 25 yards of cloth per annum per head. For non-vegetarian diet 6 ozs. of milk may be substituted by 4 ozs. of meat or fish and one egg.

In addition to food and fodder it must try to produce raw materials suitable for village industries rather than for factories, for example, instead of growing thick rind sugar-cane or long staple cotton, as demanded by the factories, soft rind sugar-cane as can be crushed by village kolhus for gur-making and short staple cotton as required for hand-spinning should be grown. The surplus land can be utilised to supplement crops needed by surrounding districts. Land utilised for sugar-cane, for the factory tobacco, jute and other money crops should be reduced to the minimum, or even eliminated altogether.

There should be differential land taxes, etc. to regulate the price of agricultural products as between themselves and in their relation to industrial products.

Commercial crops such as tobacco, jute, sugar-cane, etc. are doubly wasteful. They reduce the food production for man as well as for animals which would otherwise have got their fodder from food crops.

Primary products like cereals and milk should not be allowed to be used for commercial purposes for obtaining starch and casein.

Unless we tackle, in all earnestness this question of balanced cultivation with a view to self-sufficiency all pious wishes to avoid famine of food and cloth will be in vain.

It may be mentioned here that what has been outlined above is the correct end of planning to begin with. From there, we have to proceed step by step, to public utilities, key industries and large scale production. To commence with the last mentioned is to build the pyramid from the apex.

2. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE GANDHIAN PLAN

Principal Shriman Narayan Agarwal

With the establishment of a National Government in the country economic planning has assumed an additional importance of essentially practical nature. The Government now must decide the type of planning according to which it desires to reconstruct the economic life of the country. Earlier different Provinces have been preparing their own Plans for economic development. It is essential that there should be uniformity of fundamental principles underlying all these Plans. Otherwise, there will be confusion and conflict of basic ideals.

Under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi, I had the privilege of placing before the country "The Gandhian Plan of Economic Development". The Plan has been before the nation for over two years now. In fact, there is nothing new in the "Gandhian Plan"; it is only an honest attempt to present Gandhian ideals in a systematic manner in the light of modern economic science. And I firmly believe that the salvation of India and the world lies in economic decentralisation on the wisest possible scale.

Decentralisation is the outward manifestation of non-violence which is the basis of Gandhian thought.

It will be useful to repeat the fundamental principles for which the Gandhian Plan stands. The present Western civilization attaches the greatest importance to material well-being and maintains that the goal of planning should be the ever-increasing accumulation of physical comforts and luxuries. But Gandhiji believes in the Indian ideal of "simple living and high thinking". He is of the definite opinion that happiness is a state of mind and not the result of material prosperity. This does not mean that he wants India to adore poverty. Far from it. He would like to raise the material standard of living of the millions of villages a great deal. But Gandhiji's ideal is not the multiplication of riches but the raising of human culture and moral well-being.

The second principle of Gandhian Planning is non-violence which in essence means decentralisation. To Gandhiji, centralisation necessarily involves violence or exploitation either by the individual or the State. The Western economic Plan, including the Soviet planning, lead to centralisation of power and control which ultimately re-sult in totalitarianism. In a non-violent society, on the other hand, there must be largest freedom consistent with community life. Gandhiji, therefore, visualises a net-work of, more or less, autonomous village communities in Hindustan. Though these Communities will be co-ordinated according to a definite plan, there will be no dictation from above. The Village Republics shall enjoy the maximum measure of independence in social, economic and political spheres. Gandhiji believes that the only way to destroy Imperialism and War is to eradicate the roots of exploitation which are embedded in centralised and mechanical production. The Village Communities, according to Gandhiji's conception, will neither exploit others economically nor allow themselves to be exploited by outsiders. They will be self-sufficient as far as practicable, importing only what they cannot produce and exporting only the surplus produce for which a definite want is felt outside.

The third ideal of Gandhian economy is the recognition of Human Values as distinct from Money values. Traditional Economics lays all the emphasis on Profits and metallic value; to Gandhiji 'Man is the supreme consideration', and 'Life is more than Money'. "Khadi spirit," observes Gandhiji, "means fellow-feeling with every human being on earth." To quote Gandhiji further:

> "The value of an industry should be gauged less by the dividends it pays to sleeping share-holders than by its effects on the bodies, souls and spirits of the people employed in it. Cloth is dear which saves a few annas to the buyer, while it cheapens the lives of the men, women and children who live in the Bombay chawls."

Gandhiji, therefore, prefers millions of open-air cottage factories in the Indian villages rather than the congested and centralised huge factories in towns. Our modern life is too much mechanised; even the sources of recreation like the radio, cinema and the gramophone are mechanical. We have lost the 'human touch' in life, and Gandhiji is essentially human.

The fourth fundamental principle of Gandhism is the dignity and sanctity of Labour. Gandhiji maintains that our mental and moral well-being much depends on our physical activity. The scheme of Basic Education outlined by the Mahatma rests on the ideal of 'learning through doing'. The correlation of hand-culture and mind-culture has been proved scientifically by modern educationists and psychologists. Gandhiji, therefore, contends that the aim of our life should be the natural development and unfoldment of our personality in an atmosphere of freedom and economic independence, at least so far as the basic needs are concerned. Like Carlyle, Gandhiji regards 'Work' as 'Worship', and in his scheme of things there is no place for large-scale and mechanised industrialisation which concentrates wealth in the hands of a few and reduces human beings into cog-wheels and automatons. According to him, the lure of leisure is one of the greatest dangers to humanity; a life of honest toil and intelligent labour promotes real peace and prosperity.

Judged in the light of these four fundamental principles of Gandhian planning, the constructive programme of Khadi and Village Industries stands for a new civilization and mode of socio-economic life. Gandhiji is not a visionary; he is a practical idealist. He has been able to go to the roots of the trouble of modern times and has prescribed a way of living which alone is capable of solving our intricate economic and cultural problems on a permanent basis.

It is very wrong to think that Gandhiji is against all machinery as such ; he is against 'the modern craze for machinery' which takes special pleasure in displacing human labour. While Gandhiji wants that most of the industries should be decentralised, he is not against the Basic or Key industries, which have to be generally centralised. But he definitely lays down that the Key industries should not be in the hands of a few capitalists ; they should be run and managed by the State in the interests of the nation.

The "Gandhian Plan" drawn in accordance with these ideals of Mahatma Gandhi contains many other details relating to Agriculture, Public Utilities, Finance, Taxation, Banking, Currency and Labour. But it will be unnecessary to repeat all those details here. I would only add that a decentralised system of national economy is not a Gandhian Fad. I have purposely quoted numerous thinkers of the West in my Plan in order to show to the reader that Gandhiji is in very good company ; he is in line with the most progressive economic and political thought of the century. Many people think that Gandhiji is trying to put the hands of the clock back. I, on the other hand, sincerely maintain that Gandhiji is a century ahead of our times. We may not realise the truth of his ideals at the present moment ; but time will show that he was the prophet of the future Age in which there will be 'fields, cottage factories and workshops' side by side.

I would sincerely appeal to the National Government to make up its mind once and for all. Let it not imitate the West which is reaping the rich harvest of Wars and eternal conflict. Let the Gandhian Plan have an honest trial. I must congratulate the Madras Premier for his bold lead in this direction. Will the other Provincial Governments follow the lead?



CHAPTER XL

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

Dr. Pattabhi Sitarammya



In the following series on 'The Shape of Things to Come', the 'Historian of the Congress' looks into new horizons, those of a new day. In attempting to provide, what he has called a *Swaraj Darpan* or a 'Manual for Ministers,' he examines some of the most vital problems in the social, economic and political spheres and lays down a trend and lines for reconstruction that lies ahead.

Shape of things to come is traced in the matter of Education, Administration of Justice, the Judicial and Executive System, Co-operative system and Organisation, the place of the cottage and factory industry and the question of Nationalisation.

He deals with the problem of the States authoritatively, having been the working President of the States Peoples' Conference; with the problem of French and Portuguese possessions in India and lastly in a brief way, goes further ahead to an Asiative Federation.

1. EDUCATION

(I)

IT is easy to crave for change and in that behalf, destroy the existing order but reconstruction is a different and difficult process. For one thing all divergent forces really converge to a point and are focussed on the task of destruction easily enough, like the rays of the Sun passing through a double convex lens and becoming focussed at point so developing a measure of heat, that is enough to set fire to, say, a piece of cloth or a bit of paper. The same analogy does not apply and the same forces do not operate in regard to the processes of reconstruction. These are more like the rays passing through a double concave lens. The parallel rays impinging on the lens now diverge in a million directions away from the focal point. Where a single mind should be operating under a single leadership according to a single plan, a thousand minds begin to play, tens of leaders spring into the areana and a hundred plans of action are suggested. The whole thing becomes a maze. One does not know whither to proceed. And too, the forces at work in reconstruction are themselves the product of a reactionary system and their resultant does not always move in the right direction. These thoughts naturally occur to us at a time when we enter the era of, and have to proceed to implement the Swaraj when (having come out in flying colours in the last elections, we have reached a point at which it is our duty to implement the promises made to the people and the pledges taken by the candidates on the eve of the elections in accordance with our election manifesto) promises and dreams of our struggle. And who are they that are charged with this complex task? They are largely product of universities which must today be recast altogether,—products indeed of a system of education which is not linked to the needs of the nation, but is a department like the department of public health regimented altogether and not resilient in the least measure, like the department of the administration of justice which is wholly divorced from the traditions of the country,—mechanical, dilatory and expensive.

India's Freedom is the gateway to the Freedom of all subject countries and peace and progress of all mankind.



Gate-way to the Asian Conference.



Gandhiji addresses the Asian Conference.



Sheik Abdulla, President State Peoples' Conference and Prime Minister of Kashmir State.



States Peoples' Conference meets at Jaipur

In this the first of series of articles dealing with the shape of things to come, we shall deal with the question of education—Primary, Secondary and collegiate, which must be planned afresh from the very foundation and built up on lines wholly indigenous and suited to the genius of the race. It is only when we are sure of our workers that we can rebuild such an institution, that we can embark upon the necessary changes with any measure of confidence and some measure of certainty of success. To this end we must bring into being a new university called the Hindustani University. Universities really should be fashioned according to the division of language and not merely to the boundaries of existing provinces. There are some universities named after the language of the area, e.g. the Andhra University, the Maharastra University which has just now been resolved upon. But really they are largely territorial in structure, old fashioned in outlook and conservative to a degree. The time-honoured ideal of making English the medium of instruction is still followed by one and all of the existing universities except the Usmania University in the Nizam's dominion. There are seventeen Universities today in India—Delhi, Lahore, Agra, Benares, Aligarh, Allahabad, Calcutta, Patna, Orissa, Nagpur, Andhra, Madras, Analey, Mysore, Travancore, Usmania and Lucknow ; in addition the Maharashtra University is being fashioned. These universities, one and all, except the Usmania are designed to promote the purposes which the bearucrats of old from Sir Charles Trevelyan down to the first Lord Halifax, Sir Charles Wood (1854) had in view for the Indian people,—in a word, they were meant to subserve the ends of the British Empire in India.

In rebuilding the India of Swaraj we have to demolish the existing Universities,—roof, wall, and foundation and rebuild a new system of education from bottom to top. So much has been said of late regarding Basic Education that it is unnecessary to repeat here again about either the content thereof or its benefits. Suffice it to say this much, namely, that the days are long gone by when memorization could be accepted as the inevitable instrument of teaching and learning. Although we have been long treated to pontificial sermons on the glories of 'learning by doing', on the need for the training of the hand and the eye and of the utility of 'trial and error', yet they remain but the pious wishes of a philosophical teacher and are not rendered into practice in the day-to-day teaching in colleges and schools. Gandhi's bold attack on the prevalent system of primary education followed by the constructive efforts in re-organizing it wholly anew, have gone a long way is rousing public conscience and arresting public attention on this matter ; and by far the best testimony to this fact emanated from the heights of Simla where the Commissioner of Education, Sir John Sargent endorsed it and even blessed it whole-heartedly.

When once the primary education of the country is made free, compulsory and universal, not by the lavishing of crores of rupees on it, but by demanding that no graduate shall be given his diploma by the University unless he has produced a certificate to the effect that he has made a hundred illiterates literate, in other words, when illiteracy is thus rooted out and on the soil so produced, the plant of primary education has sprung up, it is time for re-organizing our secondary education, which will be based wholly on revolutionary changes. Three of four years of teaching in the lower secondary schools effected through the medium of the mother-tongue will effectually train the boys and girls to think, and thus develop a talent wholly destroyed in them on account of the adoption of English as the medium of instruction. And from this point boys and girls might make their choice of future studies. Eighty per cent of the population in India, it is well known, still live in villages and 69 per cent subsist on agriculture, yet there is not one word talked or taught, throughout secondary courses, about soils and surface, fertilization and aids to it, crops and their rotation, manures and their composition, pests and their causation, draught and its antidotes, floods and their preventive remedies, marketing and its benefits, trade and its routes, food and its calorific value or a balanced diet and its composition. To imagine that 70 per cent of the population does not get an iota of attention, either in the lower or in the upper grades of its secondary courses to subjects which are vital to its very existence, would be considered fantastic were it not for the fact that the victims of such an absurd system are noticed before our eyes to be wallowing in the mire of ignorance, superstition and prejudice.

At this point it behoves us to turn our attention to an institution located in an obscure corner of North India at Daurala, 9 miles from Meerut, started recently by Chaudhary Mukhtar Singh, him-

self, a man of colourful history. He was originally a manufacturer and having burnt his fingers therein, gravitated inevitably to the legal profession where he made pots of money and became tired of the profession at the end of the 20 years' standing. Then he changed his second love for the first and took to the industrial line this time. After serving as the managing agent of Lala Shri Ram's sugar mills for a time, he threw up his lucratice job and conceived the idea during his convalescence from a severe illness, of training young men, picked up in the formative years of their lives as Manufacturers not merely, as foremen and journeymen in factories. With this end in view he started a small school near L. Shri Ram's sugar mill at Daurala, for which he received a magnificient grant of one lakh from L. Jaswant Rai, the great philanthropist of the Punjab and then four lakhs of rupees from L. Shri Ram himself, of Delhi. He has conceived the audacious but brilliant idea of teaching physics, chemistry and mathematics to boys of about 14 who had passed the middle pass course through the medium of Hindi. For a time he admitted boys who had read upto the Matriculation class but found that they did not fit in with his ideal, as their servility and subservience to English had already become well-established and as they had accordingly learnt to think in English and craved to be taught in English. This ill accorded with Chaudhary Sahib's objective and introduced a rift in the lute and so he discontinued this innovation and continued his earlier practice of taking boys who had completed their middle pass course. He found these boys as yet not 'civilised' or 'city-ised' and found their minds a promising soil for bearing original fruit. Five of us on invitation motored over to Daurala 47 miles from Delhi. The buildings of the school are as yet humble but commodious and subserve the needs of the institution; they are rapidly progressing. At present they provide 5 or 6 halls for teaching, for the chemical laboratory and the section of experimental physics. I am not altogether innocent of physics or chemistry having done this subject in my B.A. classes in 1898-99. But there were in our party besides me, Deshbandhu Gupta, who had arranged the visit, his son who was a student of the B.Sc. class, Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh, who is a life-long student of chemistry and who has written a book in Bengali on organic chemistry. Shri Shankar Rao Dev was the 5th member of our party. We all witnessed with great interest the analysis of salts by the students and their experiments in physics and were surprised at the profound ease with which they described them, and the facile manner in which they handled the instruments and the reagents. We could all readily see that so early as in the second year of their course they showed signs of grasp and of progress which justified the belief that at the end of five years they will have done the M.Sc. course. Dr. P. C. Ghosh endorses this belief and he is a fastidious critic while the young B.Sc. student in our company could compare his own training in a modern college with that of the students of Daurala. The system is closely modelled after the system prevalent in Japan which was visited some years ago by Chaudhary Sahib and from where he has brought a number of books in Science which have been of immense use in shaping the courses of studies here. This lengthy reference has been made to this institution because it inaugurates a revolutionary change in the system of teaching and explodes the fatal fallacy in the idea that we must wait till the greek kalends before we can adopt the mother tongue as the medium of instruction in Colleges. The foreign language now adopted in Schools and Colleges serves as an obstruction to progress as much in the field of science as in the field of Arts and History. There is little chance for originality in thinking amongst our girls and boys so long as our medium of instruction is English, and so long as at a convenient point in the youth's life, say at the age of 15, we do not branch off the courses of study in accordance with the aptitudes of the pupils on the one hand and the needs of the nation on the other.

When this idea is developed from the secondary to the University courses the seed of basic education which sprouted in the secoudary education of a new type, will have grown into a tree bearing flower and fruit in abundance and giving to society knowledge in abundance and to the graduates a new outlook altogether. When the University takes up the threads of education so spun in the Science courses, it will be able to weave the fabric of industry from the warp and woof prepared in the earlier years of the youths' training. Chowdhary Sahib has drawn up a prospectus for the manufacture of 251 chemicals without all or any of which India's so-called Swaraj will remain lopsided or truncated. If Swaraj should be true both to adjective and the noun in that term, any lacuna left in the development in the youths' intellect will leave a huge gap in the progress of the country and make the Raj by no means a Swa-Raj. It will be Para-Raj still to the extent to

which we shall have to import a single article, a single commodity, a single chemical, a single instrument from abroad. With native talent in abundance but ignored and neglected, with knowledge widespread but organised, with native skill of hand and untaught deftness of workmanship, left altogether untrained, the country cannot make these strides of progress, which only a well ordered system of education composite in character, laying equal emphasis on its literary, scientific and technical aspects, will be found capable of achieving for the country.

For this purpose the establishment of a Hindustani University is an immediate decideratum. If any one should say that it is not time yet for it, the only fitting reply is, 'it is already too late'. Lacs of boys and girls are running their intellects to waste in the ordinary Universities of the day and if a tenth of them had passed through the portals of well-organised Hindustani University, they could have produced results that would have staggered the civilised world. From Allahabad to Delhi and Lahore the Hindi speaking world has seven Universities, but not in one of them is Hindi or Hindustani made the medium of teaching. They all follow the same routine grouping of subjects, the same callous readiness to pluck students rather than pass them, the same killing courses and syllabuses, the same 'pass' and 'honours' examinations, the same test of memorisation, the same deliberate means of choking originality. We cannot afford to indulge any longer in this pastime of intellectual homicide, let alone, spiritual disintegration. The University must be a place that builds up men and women, develop their intellect, fosters originality and promotes the creative energy. It is time that the educationists of Northern India, her industrial magnates, her captains of commerce, her intellectual aristocrats lent a helping hand to workers like Chaudhary Mukhtar Singh, and following the noble examples of L. Jaswant Rai and L. Shri Ram, established and endowed a Hindustani University located somewhere in the vicinity of Delhi so that it may serve as an example and an inspiration to the many universities in India. A Hindustani University will be not merely a provincial University for the Hindi speaking provinces of North India, but an All India University conducting its transactions through the medium of the national language of India. Who could conceive of a Swaraj India without an indigenous All India University implementing in its premises the highest ideals of imparting instruction and carrying on research through the national language of Hindustani?

In the portals and the halls of the Hindustani University much research work will have to be made. The soil of ancient sindy which has become caked up for centuries has to be turned and aerated. We must catch up the broken threads of progress lying loose for over a thousand years and connect them with the discoveries and inventions of the modern day. How did Rama fly from Lanka to India or Krishna from Kurukshethra to Dwaraka? How did the painters of Ajanta make their cement or mortar composition on the ceiling of its seven and twenty caves and execute those marvellous paintings in that darkness invisible? What was the secret of the two towers of the Masjid at Ahmedabad which manifest sympathetic vibration along with internal, when one is thumped from inside? By what instruments and mechanical aids were the ton loads of monoliths raised to the top of the Gopuram of Tanjore some 250 feet high and how does it happen that its shadow always falls within its base? Who could have visualized the proportions of the statue of the Teerthankara at Sravanabelagola in Shimoga District in Mysore? How did they cast those huge bell-metal Deksas in the Padmanabha Swami Temple at Trivendrum in which they cook food for 4000 people every day? The whispering gallery of the Bijapore Domi—was it designed or an accident? How did the artisan cast these marvellous guns in Tanjore and Bijapur or that inscrutable iron pillar near the Kutub in Delhi? Who were the sculptors that carved out the Kailas temple at Ellora, the caves at Ajanta with their monolith stupas and statues of Buddha, the massive idol of Ananta Padmanabhaswami in Travancore, Ranganadhaswami in Sreerangam, Seringapatam and in the caves of Undavalli (near Bezwada), the huge stone bulls in the Tanjore temple and in the Temples of Belur and Halibede (in Mysore), the monoliths in Mahabaliput and Vittal Temple in Hampi? In the latter temple as in Sucheendram Temple, the pillars give musical sounds. What is the secret of the perennial water flow in the Mahanandi Tank (near Nandyal) or the eternal springs that bathe the lingam at Bhuvaneswar? Who designed the water-works at Hampi, the gardens of Taj and Shalimarf, the Lattice work of the marble tomb of the Chishthi at Fatehpur Sikri, the Dewan-i-am in the Agra Fort, the glorious temples at Mount Abu and Girnar, the barrage on the Kaveri the spanish clock at Padmanabhapuram, the play of the

sun at all hours in the day on certain temples? Wherein lies the key to that mysterious knowledge embedded in the Nadi and Brihat Jathakas which reveals to you on seeing your palm your date and place of birth, your own name and your parent's names, your whole past history in circumstantial detail? How do the stars in the blue firmament exercise their admitted influence over your fate and destiny? By what latent powers in thought reading—correct and complete, made possible? How did our forbears study astronomy in such profound detail (see the Junter Munter in Delhi) and map out the heavens, predict the eclipses and the movements of the comets? What was the secret of the genius that invented the zero and the integers? How did they study anatomy and physiology and pathology to the point of diagnosing the cataract of the eye as the opacity of the double convex lens? What after all is the secret of the powers by which the involuntary heart muscle is made voluntary and obedient to the subjects' commands? By what occult capacity is a man able to stop his pulse and start it, to accelerate its speed or retard it, to increase his weight or reduce it at all and to raise himself for the ground? How is Divyadrishti or television cultivated? Wherein lay the mystery of the collyrium by applying which to the eyes, one was able to see in the dark and by applying which to the body, one became invisible to others in the light? Kautilya gives a prescription for the latter, in his Artha Sasthra. What was the composition of those wonderful weapons described in the Ithihasas which could burn and destroy, which could stupify and which could obscure vision? How were the six nervous plexius including the solar and the pituitary described in the Thanthric literature have been dissected, located and function-marked? How could those magnificient flights of Indian Psychology which begins where English Physiology ends, have been conceived and worked out? These are but a few of the researches and investigations that await the scholars and savants produced by a Hindusthanee University. These indeed are the ancient problems that challenge their modern solution at the hands of the Hindusthanee University.

(II)

There is another aspect of Education which demands immediate attention. The way the Empire was built decades ago is the way the Empire dessolves and disappears. First come the trader. He brought with him the Missionary and the soldier. Then came the civilian. The trader wanted local habitation—a mere depot ostentatiously called a 'Factory' and the Traders were called 'Factors'. There depot required a compound wall which had ramparts built at the four corners. The ramparts were surmounted by watchmen and guards—who soon became armed and were transformed into soldiers. Soldiers and traders had both a body to feed and a soul to save. To serve their souls they imported clergymen—who acted as pastors and chaplains and belonged to the order of 'gentlemen'. Thus came the Missionary into being and when Trade was followed by Territory, the watchmen became soldiers, the Missionary became the Educationist and the clerks of the Company became civilians. Amongst them all they produced the Empire. Now the days of the Empire have gone and 'Quit India' has become the direction for the Trader and the Soldier, the Missionary and the Civilian. There remains the Missionary. He too feels his occupation is gone. He has started in India Maternity Homes, Hospitals, Colleges and Schools, Boarding Houses, Orphanages, Seminaries for the deaf and the dumb, leper Asylums, Old Age Homes, Infirmaries, Widows' homes, Rescue Homes, and Criminal Settlements. He has undoubtedly done yeomen's service to the poor, the infirm, the distressed in this country. But the time has come when he does not command public support. There is a feeling of irritation, if not revolt against the management of these philanthropic bodies by Agencies moved by a proselytizing motive. Indigenous talent and inspiration must take charge of these Institutions and to that end require training which qualifies it for the new line of social service on an organized scale. A serious and satisfactory study of the child mind, the psychology of the maimed and the distressed, the leper and the Criminal is an essential condition pre-requisite for such purposes. General sociology, social psychology, social economics and social ethics, criminology and juvenile delinquency, the child mind, mental hygiene, medical, social work, psychiatry, public health and sanitation, labour work, Factory Legislation, Co-operative Planning, Social Legislation and Social Statistics—are some of the subjects that require to be mastered by our future workers. In addition there is the new field of Diplomatic service for which, International politics, and International Commerce, problems of Labour and intellectual collaboration, health emigration and immigration, domicile and a host of allied subjects require to be studied. Verily New Times



Sir C. M. Trivedi
Governor East Punjab



Sir John Colvillee
Governor of Bombay



Shri Mangaldas Pakwasa
Governor of C. P.



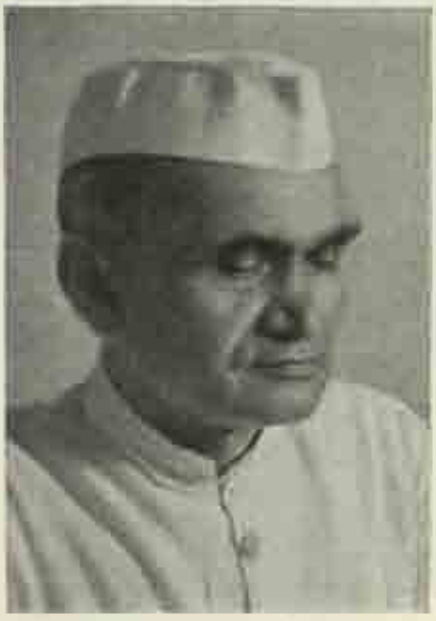
Shri Jairamdas Daulatram
Governor of Bihar



Sir Akbar Hydari
Governor of Assam



Sir Archibald Nye
Governor of Madras



Shri Kailash Nath Katju
Governor of Orissa



Sh. Sarojini Naidu
Governor of U. P.

bring in new needs and some of the needs of the changing times enumerated here demand the immediate attention of the Nation either through the existing Universities or through Catholic Universities to be started anew.

II. ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

If India has been conquered, that conquest has been effected really not by the Englishman's overpowering strength but by his overwhelming strategy in conquering the mind and spirit of India, not merely the territory. In this process the Colleges, Courts and Councils played a great part ever since their establishment within three years of the ending of "The Great Indian Mutiny" in 1857. The alumni produced in the Colleges were introduced to the four learned profession of Law, Engineering, Medicine and Teaching. Many entered Government service and the rest went to the bottomless pit of the unemployed. But all became the unbuilt-ramparts of the new citadels of the British Empire. The whole complexion of national life became changed. Status was replaced by contact. The joint family was superseded by a consciousness of individual rights. Rights themselves superseded Duties. And the Courts became the great forum resorted to by the rich and the poor, the urban and the rural population, by landlord and trader alike for the assertion of such rights. They and their lawyers and judges represented the high water mark of culture, the farthest limit of the ambition of the English educated classes. The clerks, and the clients were highly fascinated by the flying ties and the flowing gowns of the advocates and longed for the day when their sons and grandsons would lord it over the courts and the country, even as they were being lorded over. Erelong the villages became transferred to the towns and the cities and the new order of lawyers, advocates and Barristers-at-Law became the cynosure of all eyes, the observed of all observers, and the real envy of the people at large.

Eight decades of the new lines of administration with new standards of morality, integrity and honesty, transformed the whole nation whose innate love of truth became perverted, whose respect for oaths altogether decayed and disappeared, and whose social conscience and sense of corporate life degenerated to a degree. How has this degeneration been brought about? The administration of Justice, like the Education of a people must be in conformity with the traditions of a nation, particularly in a country like India where age long civic laws and social institutions have shaped the national character of the people. Instead of this, justice like education has been regimented and while the one was reduced to the administration of law, the other became limited to the imparting of instruction.

The indiscriminate resort to courts as the only forum for getting justice however attractive for its orderly, methodical and disciplined ways, soon became wasteful and mischievous and was found to be a dividing, disturbing and even disrupting factor. The English Law being alien to the spirit of the people, courts came to be regarded as gambling halls where the pastime has not only been dignified, but also come to be considered lucrative and harmless. Law and morals have become separated from one another, nay opposed to each other, when really law should be considered the acceptance by society of the call of the inner voice of the developed individual with trained sensibilities and an awakened conscience. Life has three primary sanctions for the regulation of corporate life, namely, individual conscience, public opinion and governmental law. The last is enforced by brute force but incorporates the highest achievement of the first as moderated by the second. Public opinion itself is as much intellectual as it is moral while the individual conscience represents the highest reaches of the awakened moral consciousness and sense of order and corporate well-being. What is therefore called justice is the maintenance of even and equitable relations between the rights and duties owing to one another by members of a corporate organization. Morals, however, tend to become stabilized in custom and custom itself tends to become potrified and melastic. Law can only be the greatest common donominator of conscience, custom and public opinion. Accordingly Law too tends to become legalistic, formalized and unstimulating. It becomes mechanical, artificial and therefore even unjust. It loses all elasticity, becomes rivid and uniform and serves as a steam road roller crushing all differences of big and small, appropriate and inappropriate and equitable and inequitable. The great thing therefore is to strive to keep law itself pure and unsullied, just and fair, adjustable and elastic. Such an achievement is possible only under the humanizing influence of judges rich in wordly experience, bringing to bear their knowledge and wisdom, upon the facts and phenomena that come

up before them for scrutiny. This is possible only under the assumption that the judges are at one with the people in their heritage of morals, philosophy and even economics.

But in India for over eight decades, law has been studied under the auspices of Justinian's Roman Institution and not Kautilya's Artha Sasthra. The Western concepts of evidence, contracts, limitation, property and inheritance have governed the Indian Courts and one province has differed from another in comprehending the common law, interpreting the customary law, commenting upon the codified law and laying down the case law. Law has therefore become a source of confusion rather than clarification. It has replaced common sense by an artificial new sense. It has tempted the rich to reduce their less fortunate rivals by a process of tiring out through lapse of time and loss of money. Justice delayed has been interpreted as justice denied. Justice which is costly is nothing more than justice that is ruinous. Justice at a distance from the scene of dispute is also justice that disturbs the normal life of the people.

Again it is well known that only a quarter of the decrees obtained in Courts are settled through Courts. No one knows what fate overtakes the remaining three fourths. Over 90 per cent of the cases dealt with in courts relate to facts while only seven per cent involve intricate points of law. Nor is it to be expected that in a conglommerate and heterogenous province like Madras, Bombay or C. P., that a Munsiff or a Judge not knowing the language of the disputants can render better justice than three elders of the place where the dispute has taken origin. When the Village Panchayets are therefore revived, they may well be expected to make justice cheap, quick and certain. In particular cases certified to by stated authority may appeals be allowed and equally under strict limitations may cases be instituted in the regular Law Courts. Even these courts may well be roving tribunals transacting business at places of origin of disputes so that local inspection may be possible and local public opinion may be gauged on the points at issue. The whole process of taking and adjudging evidence has to be remodelled. The oath now administered in Law Courts has lost its virtue. The frame work of the witness box has become a real insulator that protects the false witness against the shock that emanates from the current of truthfulness and enables him to say with impunity, 'I speak the untruth, the whole untruth, and nothing but untruth'. The truthful witness is harassed and humiliated in the witness box more than the false witness, who being well trained in the lore, is able to make his evidence consistent and complete; while this is so, the truthful witness is pointed out the lacunae in his evidence, the inconsistencies and improbabilities in it. We do not live in life for the Law Courts. We transact our business with the aid of our own knowledge and experience and not through solicitors and conveyaneers. The foreign law is alien to our genius. The attestation of two witnesses is a novelty in a land where the only witnesses cited are the Sun and the Moon and where the law of limitation is unknown under the stress of an inexorable public opinion which demands that it is the religious duty of the son to repay the debts of the father. It is said that in the Tanjore Palace, the Maharaja never administered an oath to the clients but only seated them under a dome on the inside of which are the images engraved in masonry of Brahma and Swaraswathi, Indra and Indrani, Vishnu and Lakshmi, and Siva and Parvati. That was enough to make the court a temple and render the evidence sacred. Today the client and the witness forswear themselves with impunity in the Law Courts and explains, when assailed for giving false evidence, that the place is only the Law Court and not a house of God. Yes, God has been banished from the Law Courts and with God, truth and morality. All this has to be changed. The Courts shall no longer be gambling dens as the Colleges may no longer be Ghulam Khanas and the sacredness of the temple of justice should be promptly restored to the Courts as the sacredness of the Temple of Learning to the Colleges. Then will clients and disputants no longer rush to the courts over trivial quarrels. Public opinion will once again be restored as the arbiter of justice between man and man. Truth shall always be available for judges on which they could base their judgments. Vindictiveness will cease to be a potent force in promoting inter village and inter family disputes. Justice shall no longer be a commodity of sale and purchase in the market places of the judiciary but shall rule once again society with its unimpeachable authority. The fissiparous tendencies of Courts will cease to operate and yield place to the spirit of goodwill and fellowship on earth so that whom God hath united by ties of good neighbourliness may not be rent asunder by man-made law, administered by courts. The Divine grace shed alike on the rich and the poor, the high and the low, the strong and the weak, shall once

again illumine the high ways and byeways of life and bring light and happiness to millions in India who have fallen unwilling but helpless victims to the relentless havoc wrought by a system alien to their traditions and genius, their history and ethics, their homes and hearths. The transitional period may not witness that golden age we are dreaming of, but change is a slow process, whether it be from the old to the new or from the new back to the old. Let us just remember the sequence of cause and consequence during such a transition and not confuse the former for the latter. If once we recognize that it is the modern legal system that has supplanted duties and installed rights on the throne of power, we shall easily be able to recognize that the rehabilitation of Panchayets may for a while be embarassing but in God's good time and that quickly enough, the old metal will outshine the new paint and the spirit of truth and Ahimsa will triumph over all war and violence.

III. JUDICIAL AND EXECUTIVE

While the administration of justice under the New Order will have to be remodelled so as to be in conformity with traditions and genius of the nation, there remains a grievous wrong in the very structure of government which requires urgent alteration at the hands of the congress governments in India. It is the habit of autocracies all over the world, unlike in ancient and modern times to concentrate power in the hands of a single authority and make it the visible symbol and centre of all authority notably, the authority to award punishments for wrongs done against the State, society or the citizen. "Magistrates and Collectors, it is said are not abstract impersonations, mere instruments through which the Law is carried into force, but they are persons whose personal character and *prestige* have a great influence in the government of a district. The *prestige* is greatly increased when the control of the Judicial and Executive work centres in one officer as Magistrate and Collector and every officer exercises greater influence when he is regarded both as the person who is to direct what is to be done, and the authority to whom matters in dispute are to be referred. It may seem well in principle to separate the two branches of one's work, then it is not by principles or by laws that this country is mostly administered but by men, and therefore it seems to me madvisable on the ground of mere principle, to render the men less able to sustain the position or perform the duties allotted to them". This view of Sir James Westland as Magistrate of Nadia to the Government of Bengal expressed in 1868, expresses in a nutshell the case for the combination of functions especially under a foreign government which is a personal and despotic in character. It has been further stated that the knowledge and experience gained in one capacity should be useful in the discharge of duties in another capacity, that the people of the country see nothing wrong in such a combination, and that the separation of functions is apt to develop a type of "purely judicial mind which leads far too frequently to the postponement of Justice to Law—an error into which an officer, whose mind has received enlargement from his training in executive work, is not nearly so likely to be led.

We may in passing say a word about the Police themselves. There were days in the Sixties of the last century (1860) when "the Magistrate was charged with oversight of the Police of his district and this had been the practice for upwards of half a century. The Magistrate gradually became a judicial officer and was little able to give his Police that executive attention which was absolutely requisite to keep it efficient." During the time of Lord William Bentinck, the complaints became universal that the Police was every where oppressive and corrupt, undisciplined and ill-supervised. The superior officers were either inefficient D.S.Ps. or as active as police officers, apt to be biassed as magistrate. This led to the separation of the magistracy from the Superintendents of Police in Bombay and elsewhere where great insecurity of life and property prevailed until Lord Clare reformed the Police in 1832-33. The first real attempt to reform the mofussil Police was made in Sindh by Sir Charles Napier on the model of the Irish Constablury and this was characterised by separate organisation, complete severence of Police judicial functions, complete subordination to general government and last, discipline to effective organisation. Its plan was adopted to the local village system as then prevailing in that province. Its results were total suppression of organised violent crime and the entire absence of dacoities or highway robberies and of cattle stealing and this despite the attitude of distrust shown by the civil officers at first. The extension of the system

to N. W. Provinces was ordered by Lord Ellenborough. Bombay copied the reforms in 1847 and then to the Punjab after its annexation. The system was effective but costly, nevertheless the Sindh mode was extended to Oudh soon after the fall of Lucknow in 1858. In Madras the result of the Torture Commission was embodied in the Act passed on 6th September, 1859 and it proved highly successful in less than a year. The Madras system maintained a village or local police constablury, a village watch establishment consisting of the Talari or village watch and detectives, secondly the village inspector who supervises the village watches within a circle of villages conveniently clubbed together and makes a daily report of all occurrences that take place to head constable of the district. The village inspectors formed an important link in connecting the Police with the respectable rural population of the country. In addition there was the general stipendiary constablury with their officers. In moving a bill on these lines Sir Bartle Freere in the Bengal Legislative Council referred to a proposition presented by a police commission to the effect that there was to be no separate detective body, no spies and informers, who under the present system, were a curse to the country.

The functions of the Police are either protective and repressive or detective to prevent crimes and disorder to find out criminals and disturbers of peace. They are in no respect judicial. There should therefore be a complete severance of the Police from the Judicial authorities in all grades of magistrates.

This subject of disconnecting the future judges with the distractions of Executive duties was widely canvassed in the late Sixties of the last century in Bengal and other provinces and various grades of separation of the two functions were put into force at various times. The combination of functions of prosecutor judge and jury which is inevitable under a system in which the Collector is the head of the Police and exercises concurrently original and appellate powers on the criminal side of the judiciary, apart from its being immoral and unjudicial, has the drawback of depriving the magistrates of that complete concentration, unbounded patience and complete security from interruption through detectment which cannot be expected by the Collector Magistrate. Much stress is laid on the argument that urges "the maintenance of the position of the district officers as absolutely essential to the maintenance of British rule in India". "All the world over, it is believed, that the man who can punish is the ruler". That may be so but even if the argument were tenable, the major premises on which it is built is in longer in force, for the question of maintaining British rule has fortunately disappeared in 1847, seventy seven years after these thoughts had been expressed. That the judicial and Executive functions should not be combined in the same official had been a long accepted principle in the English system and in 1860, it was decided after careful discussion and deliberation that it ought to be applied to India, not however in all parts and provinces but with due regard to the conditions of each. So far as India is concerned the serious and decisive step was taken on the 1st of July, 1899 and a memorial to Lord George Hamilton, the Secretary of State for India was sent on the subject of separation of the executive from judicial duties in India, signed by Lord Hobhouse, Sir Richard Garth, Sir Richard Couch, Sir Charles Sargent, Sir William Markby, Sir John Budd Phear, Sir John Scott, Sir William Wedderburn, Sir Rolland Wilson and H. A. Reynalds. The memorial condemned the prevailing system under which chief executive official of a district collects the revenue, controls the police, institutes prosecutions and at the same time exercises large judiciay powers. It traced the history of this agitation from the time of Lord Cornwallis who recognised in 1793 the dangers of combination of revenue and judicial duties in one and the same officer. If such a combination is to be condemned all the condemnable was the union of functions of constable and magistrate, public prosecutor and criminal judge, revenue collector and appeal court in revenue cases. Then in 1838 a committee was appointed for the more efficient organisation of Police in Bengal and as a member of that committee Mr. (later Sir) Frederic Halliday stated that the considerations that had been urged in favour in seperation of police from judicial duties in London applied with double force in India. He observed that a scheme to continue the duties of judge and sheriff, of Justice of Peace and constable in the individuals would be scouted as absurd as well as mischievous. His proposals were characterised by his colleagues as "systematic in plan, complete in detail and sound in principle". Again in 1854, 1856 and 1857 the subject was reverted to in Bengal and finally in 1860 a commission was appointed to inquire into the organisation

of the police which consisted of representative officers from the N. W. Pegu, Bengal, Madras, the Punjab and Oudh. And even the instructions issued to the Commission stated that a complete severance of police from judiciary was necessary. The Commission itself in its report dated September, 1860 expressly recognised and accepted this golden rule. The recommendations of the Commission were adopted by the Government of India and in accordance with them Sir Bartel Frare introduced in the Legislative Council on 29th September, 1860 a bill for the better regulation of the police. This bill became the Act 5 of 1861. The exceptional union of judicial Police with the functions in the District officer was regarded as a temporary compromise. And Sir Bartel hoped that no distant period the principle would be acted upon throughout India completely. The hope might have been realised in 1872 when the 2nd Code of the Criminal Procedure was passed. But, the fallacy that all power must be centered in the District Magistrate prevailed with government and the legislature of the day. "The District Magistrate does in his smaller local sphere all that the Home Secretary, Superintendents in England and a great deal more. For he is the representative of a paternal not a constitutional government. Police, jails, education, municipalities, roads, sanitation, dispensaries, local taxation and the imperial revenues of his district are to him a daily concern." Thus did Sir N. N. Hunter described the position of the district collector magistrate. Various cases were cited wherein justice was miscarried on account of such a combination. The Indian National Congress itself, which Lord Lansdowne as Viceroy referred to in 1891—"as a perfectly legitimate movement representing in India, what in Europe would be called the more Advanced Liberal Party", took up this question at its various sessions in 1886 to 1899, year after year. The memorial anticipated all possible objections and answered them. The first was the question of prestige of an oriental officer, this is to be mentioned only to be dismissed at this late hour of the History of India. The second related to expense which was effectually answered by Romesh Chander Dutt in his scheme drawn up in 1893, for separation "effected by a simple rearrangement of the existing staff, without extra expenditure whatsoever. It is obviously regrettable that there should be any lingering doubts in regard to the complete separation of these functions for the days are long gone past—gone no more to return,—when the creed of magistrates in this country could have been appropriately summed up in the following lines of James Russell Lowell:—

I do believe that I could give
Wat's his'n unto Caesar
For it's by him I move an' live
From him by bread and cheese are;
I do believe that all o'me
Doth bear his spuperscription,—
Will, conscience, honor, honesty
An' things o' that description.

IV. CO-OPERATION

Socialism is on every one's lips. But socialism should not be a joint stock concern with shares to the rich bearing immediate dividends while the poor are assigned shares on the basis of deferred profits. Indeed when and if the business of the firm should bear abundant profits, the dividends payable to the latter may exceed those of the preference or ordinary share-holders. As a matter of fact we observe the strange phenomenon of society in the West being constituted as a registered company with three groups of shareholders, the first being preference share holders enjoying a guaranteed cumulative dividend tax free. These are the aristocrats and the plutocrats, born with a silver spoon in the mouth and a golden cup in the hand. They neither toil nor spin and like the lily of the lakes, enjoy the fruits of the Earth without let or hindrance, without limit or count. Next comes the middle class society with its A. B. C. groupings,—the upper, the lower and the middle, who like the ordinary shareholders of a company have to wait for their dividends and may then get them in a decent measure. But the poor come last. They hold shares with deferred dividends and they are consoled with the assurance that one day they may reap a rich harvest.

So it seems in the West. The Tories representing the blue blooded aristocracy enjoy the land in thousands of acres and wealth in millins of money. They are the proud possessors of capital, owners of mills and factories, and heirs to rich dividends guaranteed to them tax free. Then came the Liberals,—not indeed born to riches or as heirs of Estates, but people who acquired votes which gave political influence and a voice in the counsels of the Empires. These rose from the ranks to halls of honor and

places of authority. They advocated free trade but soon discovered as time advanced and experience grew, that the slogan of their earlier politics could not long remain the shibboleth of their party warfare or the battle cry of their later careers. The successful Liberals became absorbed into the ranks of the Aristocrats while the unsuccessfuls gravitated to the Labour circles. Finally you have the Labour Party which began with a solitary member of the House of Commons in the seventies of the last century and has grown in numbers and influence to the point of planting their power in the year 1945. These are the shareholders in the Body-politic, Limited, with deferred shares, the profits on which have taken over a half century (1878-1945) to accrue, and when accrue they did, they came in abundance. In India we require a new alignment of politics altogether. It is true that the British in this country have started the beginnings of democracy by calling Zemindars to power, people answering the category of the classes in Britain,—the Peers of the Realm, Landed Aristocrats. When these were outmoded by growing popular education and democratic ideals, a limited franchise covering a ten per cent of the population has been the source of power and authority, and the General Elections based upon such a franchise has brought into the ministries a new aristocracy—the aristocracy of intellect, the products of Universities whose ideas and ideals are tossed about between the plutocratic and the democratic end points of the political pendulum. The time is yet to come when a truly democratic form of Provincial Governments must replace the existing hybrid type. The inauguration of adult franchise may not suddenly reverse the existing principles of popular choice for it is the tendency of the *past* to live in the *present* for a time, until it is lost in the limbo of oblivion, yielding place to the continuing influence of the present on the future. It is thus the work of decades —the replacement of the old ideas by the new, of Aristocracy by Democracy.

What are these new ideas? Again let us revert to our favouritisms. Fascism is the big stick—Bolshevism is the blood bath. Socialism is the theoretical utopia of the future, deferred shares in the company. The State as the capitalist can be no improvement upon the individual, for the labourer will still remain a hand—not the head, much less the heart. "It is only a gigantic form of capitalism. Instead of working for one master or one company of five hundred or a thousand shareholdering masters, the Russian (Indian) slave will, as Sir Daniel Hamilton has aptly stated be working for a company of 150 million masters or shareholders which goes by the name of the State. He gets the weekly wage as before while the big Company takes the big profits which it makes by selling to the wage slave for Rs. 20 boots which he could buy in Chandny Chowk for five. The big profit is then partly paid back to the wage slave in the form of social services which are proving such a curse to giver and receiver in England today." 'The manufacture of souls of a good quality' says Sir Daniel, 'is the best paying Industry any nation can embark upon'. For it is only on the rock of Trust plus honest work that India's new constitution will stand strong and secure against all storms from within or without. Let us therefore have a five year plan of our own under which all India including the Indian States will be organized co-operatively by young India. When Sir Daniel Hamilton equated this scheme in 1931 so far as British India was concerned to the hard work of an additional 50,000 men for the co-operative department who would pave the way for twice as many doctors and possibly 20 times as many teachers—all, paid directly by the people themselves and not from taxes or toddy, it looked extravagant, inconceivable and even fantastic. He conceived the idea of posts looking for men—not men for posts. And then he predicted "Young India's stomach will be filled with food, rather than its head with wind." We have lived to see the realistic character—at any rate in part,—of this prophecy; for have not Sir Joseph Bhore and his Committee asked for millions of doctors and nurses and has not Dr. John Sargeant asked for many more millions of Teachers? Nay we have also lived to see the day when none of these is to be paid from toddy, though the schemes are still based upon having to pay these millions from taxes.

The tragedy of Modern India is that new ideas are tied up to old heads, or new engines to old bogies. The former are good, strong and powerful but the latter are rickety and ramshackle and will not bear the strain of a quick march. India is to be independent but as Sir Daniel stated 'a crowned head and shackled feet ill go together and a partner chained to a bank rate of 12 to 300 per cent will not bring strength to the firm': Status is a thing of life—not of paper. India will fix her own status exactly in proportion to her own strength. In this view says Sir Daniel Hamilton, 'a Sampson shorn of his locks by Shylock can have no strength or status at

all and can move neither himself nor the world'. The future of India is therefore wrapped up in the co-operative movement,—not in this ism or that, and Independence depends upon an immediate big development of that movement. The country wants thousands, yea, lacs of young men who will prepare the way for lacs more in other nation-building departments thus binding India into one integrate whole with a banking system rooted in indigenous ideology and capable of gathering to a point the scattered and dormant forces of the country and generating a measure of faith which will move mountains.

Here is a significant passage from the pen of Sir Daniel :—

"The Government is now a head apart from the body and soul of India. Departments and file and red tape are, I daresay, necessary, but more than these are wanted. For, there is no heart beat in a Government department, no warm blood in cold dead files, no binding power in the Sircar's red tape. Only the living blood of co-operative credit, circulating from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, will bring health and strength, unity and peace, to a distracted land ; and gather All India's warring castes and creeds into One."

For over sixty years the Indian National Congress has laboured for the emancipation of India from the thraldom of the British. It was young at one time and has fairly become old. In its youth it saw visions and in its age it dreamt dreams. India's Independence is still in its puerile state. Very soon it will enter upon the period of its youth when it will be able to see visions or even dream dreams.

Much water has doubtless flown under the bridges on the twelve sacred rivers of India, but it "has not washed away the ignorance and ill health, the Malaria and malnutrition, the untouchability of the depressed classes, the communal rivalries, unemployment of the masses, and the money lender and the sin and sorrow that darken his ways of life. Today the need of the hour is "the manufacture of souls of a good quality which may at last turn out to be quite a leadingly lucrative one", as Ruskin would say. Such a manufacture requires working capital which only men of 'fierce energy and fiery character' can produce,—not indeed capital consisting of gold and silver but capital "which is full of that living gold which is better and more productive than dead gold,—the character and labour of honest men", by which it will be possible to produce corn and cattle in abundance. Once upon a time, indeed three hundred years ago, as in India today, there were in Scotland vast areas of reclaimable land and abundance of unemployed people, but there was no capital to bring them together in happy union. Banks came into being as the cementing bond, cementing barren land and idle people by means of notes and cash credits with the result that follow lands became fertile cornfields. A right system of National Education linked to an efficient network of banking organizations help to call forth in a nation all its manly power,—steadiness, integrity and honor which are far more precious than mines of gold and silver. Credit such as that of the Englishmen based on gold is apt to be jeopardised when gold becomes scare—not so the credit like that of the Scotch, based upon the Banking system which promotes employment and advances prosperity along peaceful lines.

The co-operative system is really an offspring of the Banking system. Every villager shall come into direct touch with the Bank and he shall be released from the clutches of the money-lender. He must be financed not individually but in groups,—co-operatively and he will be able to work in accordance with the motto Labour Omina Vincit or Labour conquers all. That is not all, labour also sets you free. It creates food for the people and money for Government. It creates employment build up the state and teach self-government and re-establish the village republic—indeed it will carve out a miniature Co-operative State. Thus will be proved to a sceptic world that puts its faith in gold and silver the grand truth that Labour is real capital, is the "fund" which provides all the necessaries and conveniences of life.

How shall we implement this great principle of co-operation so that it may serve the purposes of a Socialist State? In other words how shall we establish a Co-operative Commonwealth? The very basis of such a scheme is joint production and distribution. It shall be a halfway house between the collective farming of Russia and the individual ownership underlying the private property. The element of compulsion incidental to and inevitable from collective forming will be absent. The element of uncertainty of production and inefficiency of effort invariably associated with private property will

equally be absent. The co-operative farm composed of thirty members will be an ideal mean between the compulsory, collective plan and the precarious individual scheme, enlisting in the common endeavour enough of individual effort and joint labour to ensure personal attention based upon a sense of personal profit. The personality of the individual is not lost in a joint organization comprising thirty souls. Indeed these thirty will be a cluster of kindred souls, not a conglomeration of heterogeneous hands. Such a scheme is in accord with the tradition of ancient India under a village system which had collective farming on a limited scale with proportionate distribution of yield based upon need—not greed.

When thus combined production is organized, a co-operative distribution follows as night follows day. All fraud in weights and measures, all adulteration of goods will lose the motive that prompts such dishonesty and when in addition the surplus profits return to the consumer whose custom has built them up, the inequities of private trade will have been once for all obliterated.

The task therefore of the Minister of Co-operation will be not merely to establish a Provincial Co-operative wholesale Society, a Provincial Apex Bank and a Provincial Propaganda Society, but to organize every craft and art, every trade and business, every means of transport and communication, every variety of cultivation, every house and office, every home and hearth, every hospital and seminary, every asylum and settlement on a co-operative basis with limited membership, so as to make these bodies compact and close knit, so promoting a spirit of kinship and cordiality so providing opportunities for intimacy with and interest in one another. The burden of debt of the cultivating ryot and the labouring worker shall be eliminated, and thousand villages shall alike be freed of the pest of that class of citizens—called money lenders, but more appropriately to have been named blood-suckers, who fatten upon the hard-earned wages of those who toil and moil all day long. No debt shall be recognized which is due to an individual. All credit shall be controlled and the class of money-lenders if they exist for a time shall be licensed in that behalf. No creditor shall even so harass his debtor by approaching him at his house or apprehending him in his movements or molesting him anywhere or in any manner or measure. Thus shall a new world be brought into being, free of jealousies and rancour, of jars and recriminations, of vengeance and vendetta, of anger and retribution,—indeed a new heaven on earth, a new brotherhood with community of interest and commonness of sympathy, so that with Whittier one can say:

"O brother, man, fold to thy heart thy brother
Where pity dwells, the peace of God is there
To worship rightly is to love each other,
Each smile a hymn, each kindly deed a prayer,
Then shall all shackles fall; the stormy clangour,
Of wild war-musice o'er the Earth shall cease,
Love shall tread out the baleful fire of anger;
And in its ashes plant the tree of peace."

Whittier.

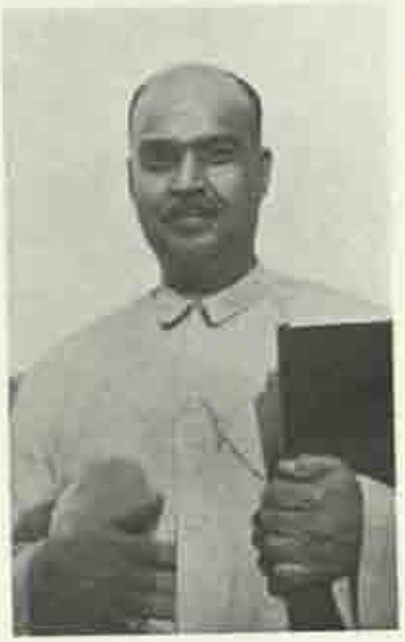
Each nation has its own scheme of social and civic life. Likewise in India the structure of the village provides the key to the structure of society. The gregarious instinct in man as in lower animals has taught him to live with fellowmen, not at war with one another, but with an organization in which the individual surrender a portion of his rights in order to maintain a community and invest it with the authority for fulfilling common purposes and discharging common responsibilities. It is quite conceivable that even if a number of families live together, each unit may be self-contained and self-centred but the social instinct which is already developed in the higher types of animals, finds its acme in man in the organization of numerous units of families into a larger unity called the village community,—growing its food in common and finding its needs of agriculture, through the smith and the carpenter, its needs of clothing through the spinner and the weaver, its needs of housing through the bricklayer and tile maker, and again through the smith and carpenter, through the mason and the potter, its needs of education through the teacher and the craftsman, its needs of treatments through the physician and the surgeon, its needs of salvation through the priest and the philosopher, its needs of health and happiness through the barber, the dhobie and the cobbler, its wealth through the Vysya and its weapons through the warrior. A co-ordination thus of the tasks of each of these artisans and craftsmen has developed rules of conduct compendiously termed Dharma and almost compelling in character by common consent. The Dharma led to the professions and professions themselves became the expression of Dharma and they easily and naturally tended to become hereditary so that every home became a seminary, every parent a Guru and every



Dr. John Mathai
(Transport & Railway)



Sri C. H. Bhabha
(Commerce)



Sri Shyama Prasad Mukherjee
(Industries & Supplies



Sri Rafi Ahmed Kidwai
(Communications-Post & Air)



Sri Jawaharlal Nehru
(External Affairs & Commonwealth Relations)



Sardar Baldev Singh
(Defence)



Rajkumari Amrit Kaur
(Health)



Sri Jagjivan Ram
(Labour)

child a Sishya, learning the agelong secrets of an art or craft on the lap of the father and carrying the skill onward to posterity ever so much more improved. Here then was a social structure in which no task was high and none low—all tasks ranking equally as the planks of a pealform, as the limbs of the human body, as the factors of society craft life developed guilds that exercised economic controls over the different members of each craft. A code of honor soon came into being and public opinion so expressed, controlled society in respect of supply and demand, production and consumption, imports and exports. The whole village became one unit, sharing in common the joys and sorrows of the people inhabiting it. The birth of a child was celebrated with eclat by one and all. A marriage in a home brought together the yarn of the village to it, as it brought together its ghee, its milk, its fuel and its vegetables. Society thus led a co-operative life and was sustained by a balance of learning against wealth, by an equipoise between the material and the spiritual services rendered to it by each group composing it.

It was inevitable that in the wake of contacts with the outer world, and of the influence of individual rights pitted against social duties, even the Indian Village fell an easy prey to the materialistic ideals of life—selfishness and envy, greed and idleness, cynacism and despair, jealousies have grown, anger has become the bane of life. Vengeance has replaced forgiveness. Violence has been installed on the throne where once long suffering and love had reigned. It may not be possible to sustain the village in all its purity, but one can and must strive to make it once again self-contained and self-sustaining, make it the abode of indigenous art and the centre of the activity of the skilled craftsman. If these have to survive the onslaughts of time and civilisation so called, they have to be rehabilitated on a co-operative basis. Production, not merely industrial but agricultural as well, must be as far as possible, compatibly with efficiency, must be reorganized on a collective basis, while consumption must be helped by a co-operative system of distribution so as to eliminate the evils of adulteration and fraud in weights and measures. When rural and urban credit is freed of the ignominy which its monopoly in the hands of the professional and usurous money-lender and becomes a basal factor of co-operative endeavour, when the village services and amenities in respect of irrigation, forests, education and administration of justice, agriculture and industry, recreations and entertainments are all rehabilitated on the principle of each for all and all for each, when factories and mills cease to be capitalistic but are converted into co-operative concerns, in which the producer and the consumer become participants in the profits and virtually become owners no less than workers, when the co-operative society becomes the electoral unit for village, Tahsil, District, Provincial and National Elections, we shall have laid well and truly the foundations of the Co-operative Commonwealth resting upon the village as the starting point of Indian Nationalism and rising from the broad and firm rural foundations to the crest where from it may well broadcast the glad tidings to a grateful world, of a new social order based upon the maxim:

"From each According His Capacity,
and To each according to His Skill."

V. THE SPINNING WHEEL AND THE STEERING WHEEL

(I)

The main question that a national Government will have to face and answer is 'What kind of national structure is it that Swaraj India should represent? Should it be a top-heavy, city ridden, machine made, plutocrat-driven nationalism or should it be a broadbased, pyramid with the village as its starting point and the city at its crest? To solve this problem one has to look at the West and the lines on which it has progressed in recent years. The glory of the Western civilization began with the invention of the steam engine for until then, Britain did not know cotton fabrics and till a century before it, she was largely a piratical nation whose people were described as a people lazy as Spaniards. It was the Engine that transformed the nation beyond all recognition. When power was applied to the tools and implements of a cottage industry, home crafts gave place to mill products and the village and town labourer became a factory hand. Mills and Factories produced commodities on a monstrous scale. Large production demanded large consumption. Consumption necessitated a search for markets. Markets meant political supremacy and conquest—whether of trade or territory could not be achieved except by force. Vast foreign trade meant vast military strength and it was thus that militarism in war and

Industrialism in peace gave rise to Imperialism which in turn fostered the army and the commerce of the nation. A circle of prosperity was soon established and became the marvel of the world and was presently set up as model to copy for other nations. Germany did not take long to equal and even excel Britain in her race for markets and armaments and both Britain and Germany became industrial creditor nations, establishing empires, multiplying armies, and competing with each other in a spirit of mutual rivalry and even jealousy. Both nations were more industrial than agricultural, while France led a peaceful life balancing its agriculture against industry. Italy however presented a contrast, being more agricultural than industrial. America continued an agricultural and debtor nation till World War I and became an industrial and creditor nation only after that war. The face of Europe soon changed and India and the Eastern countries began to imitate at any rate, aspire to Europe's plan of development. Little did they realize that Europe's prosperity was solely at the expense of India and if all the Eastern Countries became Industrial, Europe's property, Europe's standard of life, Europe's labour would all suffer as a matter of course. If every nation has a favourable balance of trade, it passes one's understanding as to wherefrom the balance will be made up. It would be like all the parents wanting only sons so that they might bring dowries; a nice proposition indeed; for who will then give the dowry and whom will the sons marry? It is therefore absurd to talk of India imitating Europe for Europe's prosperity must end when Asia's prosperity begins. There is a significant Irish proverb which says "Prosper Ireland means perish England!" Europe and India are in a similar position. When India balances her industries against her agriculture, England's standard of life will fall in the proportion in which India's may rise. The safety and the true balance of progress of all countries lies therefore in working up the standard of life to an optimum, though that may mean working down the levels already attained by some. It is not meet for one nation to ask for a crest in prosperity only by demanding that its fellow nations shall go down into the trough. All nations will prosper alike when they produce their own food, make their own raiment, fabricate their own housing, arranging their own treatment and provide their own education.

What does this mean? In effect it means that each nation shall be self-contained in respect of all bodily and essential needs of life—not that there should be no foreign trade as between nation and nation, but that all such trade must be bottle-necked in the foreign office of the state and must be based on international barter. That would ensure a healthy intercourse of commerce as much as of culture and promote goodwill and peace on earth. It would put an end to all jars and recriminations, to all jealousies and rivalries and foster a healthy spirit of cooperation and sound Internationalism. Then would Independence mean Interdependence and each nation will have ample opportunities to develop its genius without let or hindrance and with its aid attempt a solution of the world's problems in accordance with its own traditions and insight.

In this view then India shall be a self-sufficient (but by no means a self-centred) nation. It shall make its engines and turbines, its tools and machinery, its motors and planes, its ships and submarines; and it shall grow its good and fruit, its vegetables and herbs, manufacture its chemicals and drugs, its medicines and instruments, its spinning wheel and its steering wheel. It shall use up all its cotton and groundnut, its skins and hides, its rubber and tobacco, its tea and coffee. India's genius and originality are of unknown depths. Long disuse has atrophied them. The opportunities afforded by a National Government shall call forth fruitful activity in the same measure and manner as a favourable season calls forth a rich harvest from a virgin soil. A subtle intellect wedded to a deft hand and an industrious habit will establish conditions of development which will easily eclipse those in the West with its conceptions of limited thinking and still more limited hours of labour coupled with unlimited love of luxury and comfort. When thus India becomes self-supporting, it will be the cumulative effect of a scheme of self-sufficiency of its provinces, of course with such compensatory support as may be found necessary. Provincial self-sufficiency will bread District and Village self-sufficiency, so rehabilitating the self-complete village of the olden times,—or of the golden age. Wealth will be produced out of village labour and money will flow into the village coffers. The Indian village will once again become the source and centre of production of artistic fabrics, and art beauties of jewellery, furniture and home equipment. The whole of national life, individual and corporate will bear witness to the Nation's thought and aspiration and carry with it proofs of its skill and strength. Once again will

India be truly Indian and Indian life be a true Indian fabric woven by the loom of time on the warp of traditional past with the waft of the aspiring present.

(II)

To give a rural bias to our civilization, requires a change of atmosphere in which the people of the villages are not merely considered uneducated yokels but intelligent citizens fit for responsibility and capable of thinking, judging and acting for themselves. The contempt in which they are held by the District Officials must yield place not merely to a positive attitude of regard but to a feeling of identity of interest between the voter, the Officer and the Minister. As things stand it is a case of new wine poured into old bottles or new engines tacked on to old bogeys. The engines are good and efficient and have the capacity to develop power as well as speed. But the bogeys are rickety and ramshackle and will not stand the high speed of a fast engine. The British Government has in the past been made fool proof and kept safe from the stupidity of a dullard as well as the risk of the genius amongst the Officials. They have their manuals, their standing orders, their G.O.'s, their rules and regulations, their foot-rule and measure-tape. All these must yield place to the overriding importance of human intercourse to a happy and harmonious synthesis of the sound unsophisticated common sense of the village ryot and the new acquired technical sense of the expert and the departmental official.

A village Panchayit Board must not be a work shop product cast in the Official moulds, rigid in character, unresponsive to environment, and always liable to be ground down by the machinery of the administrative workshop. It must be treated as a living body endowed with human personality, discretion and judgment, capable of tiding over obstacles by its own resources and by a lively recognition of the limitations and facilities immediately around itself. The village folks can make a road, fill up a ditch, build a culvert, erect a lamp-post, maintain a dry earth dung pit, tend a stud bull, improve the breed of the cattle, rotate the crops, maintain common funds and provide for the village entertainments. It is only when they are saddled with such responsibilities that they can qualify themselves for higher duties as members of the District Boards, Provincial Assemblies and All India Councils. Today the enemy of progress in village is not the British Official but the sundried Indian bureaucrat who has to be re-educated into the belief that he is running his own Government for his own people on his own soil, that he need not look to foreign masters and fear their frowns or covet their favours, but that he has his new masters in the village voter whose vote has made the Minister and can unmake the Official. The famous old saying of Lowe in the House of Commons—'Let us educate our masters', may be appropriate to the Times in India but here the 'Masters' are inverted commas and must be made to mean the heirarchy of Officials trained up by the British. The British are doubtless leaving the country but would be leaving their shadows and centralization if the Officials are not re-educated to their new duties and taught to regard their countrymen in the villages as their paymasters, their mentors and monitors and treat the village as the real scene and centre of national life, yea, the starting point, as well as the destination of Indian Nationalism.

VI. NATIONALIZATION

It has been stated in the Congress Manifesto that the key and basic industries would be either nationalized or brought under national control. In India the foreign rule that has held sway for over a century and a half has helped to construct certain of these key industries on a basis other than of private ownership. While in England cable companies, telegraph and telephone concerns, aerial ways, shipping companies, and Railways and Tramways are or were being till recently manned by private capital, and while there have been even Mail Steam companies and Bus companies—equally private owned in India, the foreign government has imported its capital from abroad and run the Railways partly as state owned, but the bulk of them as private foreign owned. At first as guaranteed dividend was paid to these companies and this continued till almost the beginning of this century. But the last company has been purchased by 1946 although the Management of some Railways still rests with the companies. So far as other means of communication are concerned the Telegraph and the Cable have all along been run by Government and so is the Post. The

bus service has been wholly in private hands except for those run by Railways. There was a stout opposition presented to a proposal made in the Southern Presidencies by District Board to take over the service as a whole. It must be admitted that they afford an occupation to thousands of young men trained as fitters and drivers who have have put in a small capital and are eking out an honourable livelihood. All Capital cannot be a crime. It is Capital run amuk that requires to be commendeered or controlled. To control the bus service, Government have at first compelled the formation of unions and thereafter the registration of public companies composed of groups of bus owners under the Indian Companies' Act. When this is done, and it is being done rapidly and readily, the means of controlling the traffic, the fares and the profits will have been completely and effectively established. There remain the Telephones which till recently have been partly Company-owned and partly State-owned. But now all of them have been taken over by the State. It is thus seen that nationalization and national control of communication have been brought under more easily in India than in Britain. The aerial ways that are just now being developed in India, notably in the field of civil aviation, may soon be taken over by the State.

That takes us to a consideration of the key industries—a term which has not been authoritatively defined anywhere, but perhaps the definition is easily furnished by the achievements of the Labour Government and the trends of its measures during the first nine months of administration by the third Labour Ministry of the United Kingdom (July '45 to March '46). The first two having came into existence in 1925 and 1929 had a short-lived career. The Labour Government in England had in the space of nine months Nationalized:

1. The Bank of England.

2. Civil Aviation as a first step to public ownership and control of all means of inland transport, rail, road and canal, all British Cable and wireless communication while keeping the close control over British Broadcasting and the atom bomb.

3. It has nationalized doctors and hospitals. It has amended its decision to nationalize the iron and steel and related industries.

The Labour Manifesto in addition says:—Our organization is determined to support the Government in its task of rehabilitating industries and vital sources, of establishing a comprehensive system of national insurance for the protection of the peoples providing full employment building (homes) for all, developing the country's industrial capacity for the satisfaction of the people's domestic needs and rebuilding our overseas trade which enable our country to buy its necessities. In the work that the Labour Government has so far accomplished, organized workers find the assurance that the Governments' policy is not only to promote its programme of social ownership and social security but to secure redress of wrongs inflicted upon them by reactionary governments in the past.

In India, the textile industry, the coal industry and the iron industry may well come up for early attention with a view to nationalization. Food and clothing are the primary necessaries of life and standing on a par with them come housing, education and public health. Naturally then the nationalization of land as the source of all food takes a place of priority with the nationalization of the textile industry which is the source of all cloth. No serious argumentation is required for the nationalization of the Iron and Steel Industry for that is the very root and source of all machinery and machine industries. During the war all these have been brought under State control, though they were not regularly nationalized. All cloth and all food grains and all machinery have been effectively brought under State control and if production of food grains had been controlled and regulated as effecetively as that of cloth and machinery and tools, India would perhaps not have been in the grip of famine, unprecedented in intensly as well as extensiveness—such as Mr. Hoover had anticipated in the spring of 1946. As things stand millions of acres are producing tobacco, turmeric, groundnut and cotton which might have produced rice, maize and millet and even wheat with the result that the cutting off of Burma rice would not have created an alarming food situation in Hindusthan proper.

The time has undoubtedly came when even if the whole land in the country be not nationalized, the use to which it is put and the crops raised on it must be studied in relation to the needs of the country as a whole and then determined by considerations of a comprehensive character, having in view

the standpoint of the needs of the whole nation. In the filed of the Textile Industry it is urgently necessary that the Textile mills should not be a competitor to the handloom Industry and therefore a healthy restraint against the Textile mills producing cloth lower than the 40, or yarn lower than the 20, would save millions of craftsmen and artisans from unemployment. The story of the destruction of the cottage industries in competition with the machine industries is a sad one which has disorganized the whole structure and functioning of the 7 lakh villages which once formed and must one day again form the basis of the pyramid of Indian nationalism. But this is a story which may be appropriately narrated and dealt with in a separate section. Suffice it here to say that our new fangled ideas about machinery and new-bred passion for machine products should not destroy the native skil of Indian craftsmanship with its original powers, its creative energy, its individual ownership, its whole production of an artistic product.

Education and public health or sanitation, along with co-operation are the three sister graces that bring light and happiness to many a dark and miserable home. That education should be nationalized and made available to all that thirst for it, all that have an aptitude and genius for it, is an incontrovertible proposition and the theory that the universities are only for the rich must be given the gobye, while at the other end primary education must be based on modern basic principles which link it to the needs of the nation and the genius and traditions of the country. Illiteracy can only be removed when the subject is taken up not in a spirit of charity but is tackled as an integral factor of nascent Indian Nationalism. The worst attention has perhaps been paid to public health. Village sanitation has now come to be regarded as a contradiction of terms. Maternity hospitals and homes are only conspicuous by their absence. Child mortality has reached an appalling percentage. The average expectancy of life is as low as 22 and odd, for men, and 23 and odd for women. Likewise the average yearly income of the Indian is variously estimated from Rs. 43 to Rs. 103/-. There is a necessary and inevitable inter linking of health and economics.

Health and longevity, longevity and earnings, earnings and food ; adequate and health giving food and longevity. This is a precious circle of human life which when neglected necessarily becomes a vicious circle and works havoc.

Banks and Insurance form a category by themselves. The time has certainly came when these should no longer be left in private hands. They discharge public utility functions which no civilized government can, to the detriment of its own duties keep on looking vacantly at, while they are being subjected to all the vicecitudes incidental to private effort. Heavy dividends which must in all conscience be reverting to the depositors in Banks and the Insured in the Insurance Companies, help only to swell the pockets of the Bankers and the Insurers. All the Insurance Companies and the Banks must be regarded as institutions belonging to the state and their capital must be bought up while their management must be in the hands of the State. After all the State means the men and women working under the State control and while there may not be much difference in the management of these firms, the control exercised by the State would undoubtedly make that management equitable and fair to all parties. The one great public utility service is the supply of electricity which must, without loss of time, be, taken over by the State. In fact private Electric Corporations are granted licenses to float their Companies on the condition that in 30 years they would be prepared to hand over their concerns to the Municipalities or the State. This term may advantageously be curtailed so as to make possible the transfer of such concerns earlier from private hands to a public agency or organization.

It is possible that some doubts may be entertained about the capacity of the State to manage such concerns. There is an element of truth in it of the doubts relate to the orgaization of the supply in the earlier days of its establishment. For instance there is a personal element brought into play in urging houseowners to take private house connections of electricity. The same zeal may not be, has not indeed been, shown in organizing the distribution of electric connections when the concern is municipality owned, because there is not the same personal interest much less personal influence that is brought to bear on the question when the concern is private-owned. This however is an observation which is true of young Companies as they were instituted about a decade or two before the year 1947. Ideas have changed, the Municipal sense is keen and critical. A sense of citizenship is a more universal feature today than twenty

years ago. Public sympathy is always an asset to any country or any ages but when it is there with you in all its pristine glory, you may not discard it as unexisting or as fruitless.

Thus shall we have to reconstruct society from the village to the city, from the homecraft to Machine products, from the patriarchal clan to the autocratic tribe, from the feudal landlordism to the latter-day capitalism and finally (for the time being) from individual ownership to State control. Thus side by side grow two ideas which may be summed up in a combined phrase,—Gandhian Socialism, the adjective helping to Indianize Socialism and the Nehru helping to make the socialism self contained.

VII. THE STATES

(I)

While the Educational and the Judicial, the Economic and the Industrial, the social and the moral reconstruction of India in the next Quinquennium or two are apt to engage public attention, the problem of the States and their absorption in the Indian Union is undoubtedly proving a far more interesting and engrossing issue as it is a far more urgent and complicated one, than the socio-economic rehabilitation of the land. India has been divided and dismembered in more than one plane. Politically it presented till the 15th August, 11 Provinces and 562 States which constituted a vertical division; communally you come across a horizontal division of the people into Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis, Jains and Jews. Territorially you witness a transverse cut of the villages and towns into rural and urban, and ethnically you see oblique divisions of the population into the Excluded and semi Excluded areas and Scheduled and Non-Scheduled and Tribal class. And in every case these unnatural divisions, based upon no natural lines of demarkation, have retarded progress and helped to keep certain areas, certain people and certain communities in a notably backward condition—more especially in political consciousness, economic self-sufficiency and social well-being.

Amongst them all the lot of the Indian States excites pity and pathos and calls for immediate steps to repair and reconstruct it. A third once of India's vast area and a fourth of Hindusthan's unnumbered millions, but really after the secession of Pakistan, one half of India (residual) in area is allowed to stagnate under the personal and autocratic rule of the 562 Princes, who exhibit various degrees of development from the subhuman to the civilized and democratic. The lot of such states can be easily visualized when it is admitted that there are only forty States having some sort of Legislative or Advisory bodies with only twenty of them having well-constituted Legislatures, that the salute States are not as many as forty and that even among them are small ones yielding a few laks of Rupees income which however, happened to get the salute guns through some concentration of circumstances. The All India States' People's Conference has been organized long years ago, though it has not sat every year in full session. Its Standing Committee and Council have met from time to time regularly during the last decade and dealt with the main problems as well as the minor issues that have sprung into importance every now and then. At its Ludhiana Session presided over by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru the All India States' People's Conference resolved that only those States should be allowed individual existence which have a population of not less than 20 lacs or a revenue of not less than 50 lacs of rupees. These figures were in 1946 been changed into 50 lacs of people and 3 crores of Revenues. It was strange that soon after the Ludhiana resolution had been passed in February, 1939, the Viceroy himself acting as Crown Representative should have echoed somewhat similar views. But the ideas of amalgamation entertained in the two quarters materially differed. The latter's view was to attach the smaller states to bigger one and consolidate the power of the Princes while the former's plan was to amalgamate the States themselves so as to make them sufficiently large in numbers as well as importance for the convenient and effective functioning of the group so formed as a democratic unit in the body politic of India.

The concurrent growth of popular awakening amongst the people of the States and the Provinces is but to be expected in view of the fact that they are closely related to one another by ties of consanguinity in many cases, apart from bonds of common tradition, culture and aspiration. Nevertheless the people of the States began their march rather late and were necessarily lagging behind their fellow citizens of the Provinces. Their difficulties have been greater than those of the latter for while the latter were under the direct subjection of the British, they were the subjects of subject Princes and their latitude

and longitude of civil liberties were naturally delimited by the conservatism, the ignorance and the prejudices of their autocratic rulers for one thing and by the unrelenting despotism of the Residents or the Agents General in the States whose little finger was always discovered to be thicker than the loins of the Governors of Provinces and Civilians ruling Districts in the British Indian Provinces. It was a job, therefore, for the people of the States to organize themselves, but ideas of progress are no less infectious than the havoc of pathogenic organisms whose activities are not limited by the intervention of seas or forests or even mountains. And between a British Indian Province and an Indian State there intervened only a toll bar, a rope in effect which barred the way but opened it on payment of a Rupee. The rapid intercourse of culture and commerce which has taken place without let or hindrance, between States and provinces, has popularized the Congress in the States where similar political organizations have been latterly brought into being, particularly between 1936 and 1946. This was an event which could not be neglected, or tolerated by the Princes or their Advisers and the hand of repression which necessarily intervened was just the stimulus that was welcomed by the people of the States. Satyagraha in its protean shapes soon came into being and helped to revive and reinvigorate the political bodies which might otherwise have languished. In Travancore and Hyderabad, the very word 'Congress' as occuring in the denominations of these bodies was objected to but the usual travail of repression gave rebirth to the very nomenclature and institutions that were once objected to and the bodies so named have been reborn and functioning with renewed vigour and added zest. But behind this simple-looking and easily told story lies the gruesome story of toil and tears of sweat and blood to which thousands of States' People have fallen victims during the past two decades. The Congress itself was slow to recognize the demands of the States' People. These demands were looked upon as the weapon employed by malcontents including States' People Socialists and anti-khadderites. Long years ago in 1894 the Congress expressed sympathy with the Royal Family of Mysore in a recent bereavement of theirs. Two years later, Congress laid down the rule that 'no Indian Prince or Chief shall be deposed on the ground of maladministration till his conduct shall have been established to the satisfaction of a public tribunal'. A quarter of a century elapsed and in 1920 the Congress appealed to all Indian Princes that they should at once grant the representative form of Government to their subjects". Seven years later in 1927 the Madras Session demanded that Princes should establish representative institution and responsible Government in their States at an early date." Twenty years elapsed and not in a single state that early date arrived—only in Cochin we were in sight of it. In 1928 the Nehru Committee recommended a Round Table Conference between Princes, their people and the people of the Province for reaching an understanding and solving all difficulties. A negative aid was rendered to the States' People at the Calcutta Session, by the deletion of a proviso 'that inclusion of Indian States in the Electorate should not be taken to include any interference by the Congress in the internal affairs of such States'. On the positive side the Congress recommended the enactment of Laws governing the elementary and fundamental Rights of citizenship, and assured the people of the Indian States of its sympathy with and support to their legitimate struggle for the attainment of full Responsible Government in the States'.

It was at Lahore that Congress declared that

> "The time has now arrived for the Princes to grant Responsible Government to their people and to enact Laws safeguarding their fundamental rights"

In 1931 Gandhiji pleaded with the Princes for finding a place for their subjects also in any scheme that they may evolve. In 1935 the Working Committee of the Congress recognized that

"The People in the Indian States have an inherent right to Swaraj no less than the people of British India—'It should be understood however, that the responsibility and the burden of carrying on that struggle within the States must necessarily fall on the States People themselves. The Congress can exercise moral and friendly influence upon the States and this it is bound to do wherever possible. The Congress has no other power under existing circumstances—.

"At the same time it is hardly necessary to assure that the Congress will never be guilty of sacrificing their interests in order to buy the support of the Princes". At the Lucknow Session in 1936, the Congress declared that 'The People of the States

should have the same right of self-determination as those of the rest of India and the Congress stands for the same civil, political and democratic liberties for every part of India. The same resolution was reaffirmed at Faizpur. The outlook however began to change for it was borne in upon the States People year after year that "the struggle for liberty within the States, has, in the very nature of things, to be carried on by the People of the States themselves".

The year 1938 was however a critical year for at Haripura there was a battle royal on the question of forming Congress Committees in States and it was finally decided that such Committees if any should confine themselves to the constructive programmes. The same view was confirmed by the A. I. C. C. in August 1946. Thus was the burden of working out their salvation thrown upon the people of the States. That was how Hyderabad, Mysore, Travancore, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Baroda, Gwalior, Indore, Bhopal, Rewa and a host of minor States gave battle and won partial victories but for which it would not have been possible for the States' People to secure for themselves more than half the seats allotted to the States. It is a tragedy that while the nation is anxiously looking forward to the first link of Freedom, she should still feel tied up—at any rate so far as one half of India's area is concerned—to the last shackle of bondage.

Nor did the Congress find the course of political progress of the States' People's Organisations smooth and uncomplicated. The divided loyalties than soon came into operation in the activities of these bodies placed the Congress in an unenviable position. But the conflicts that arose were soon on their way to solution by the fact that the All India States' People's Conference was presided over by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who was thrice president of the Congress and who while continuing to be the President of the All India States' People's Conference, became once again the President of the Congress for the fourth time in May 1, '46. This brought matters to a head. The two trains of the States' People and the People of the Provinces which started on separate lines apparently along divergent lines, became parallel at Haripura and ever since tended to be convergent in their course until at last, they were amalgamated into one train, on one line, under one Driver in May 1946. There were thus no longer two Indias—British and Indian, Provinces and States, but one India, united and indivisible marching to one Union, one Federation with one Constitution, one Democracy, one coin and one postage stamp.

(II)

The near future should consolidate such a Union. The visit of the Cabinet Mission to India in April-June 1946, served as a magic force that opened the eyes of the Princes themselves whose changer stepped aside from the narrower problems of residents and the Political Department and drew publicly the attention of the Princes to the urgent need for the expansion of civil liberties, for the establishment and liberalization of Legislatures and for the all round development of the States and their People at the earliest possible moment.

The All India States' People's Conference has since the time of Cripps' visit (1942) pleaded for full representation to the States' People on the Constituent Assembly and has succeeded in sending on to it nearly a half of the representatives that have so far joined the Assembly. The terms offered to the federating units are easy. Their monarchies remain. Their dynastic descent is undisturbed. Their boundaries remain intact. They retain all the powers they do not part with. They surrender only Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communications with the finances necessary for them. But there has been a hitch about some of the States joining the Union. The Cabinet Mission themselves have in their Statement of 12th May 1946, published however on the 23rd May, declared that after the Constituent Assembly had reported and the new Constitution came into being, the British Paramountcy would no longer reside in the British Crown nor in the New Indian Government and that the rights surrendered by the States to the Crown would revert to them. In effect the States would become legally independent and as Independent Units, they must protect themselves as it was added that the British troops would no longer be there in India to defend the Princes against internal commotions or external aggression. There should therefore have been but one course open to the Princes and that to join the Indian Union. If there be a State that is so fatuous as to think that by the aid of its vast revenues and large population could remain a Dominion under the British, it is certain that such day dreams would not see their fulfilment when a large majority of the population linked themselves to the larger Indian Union.



Shri C. Rajagopalachari

Governor, Governor-General and hermit. His keen intellect foresaw the shape of our freedom. Rajaji's formula had offered Jinnah such Pakistan, as he ultimately got with one vital difference. The formula provided for planned exchange of population that might have avoided the colossal tragedy of Mountbatten-plan.



Shri K. C. Neogy

Minister for Refugees and Rehabilitation-the Pakistan portfolio



Shri Purshotam Das Tandon

He fought against acceptance of Freedom with vivisection.



Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargava

Premier of India's Western Frontier. Constitutional legatee of Pakistan in Western Punjab.



Shri Gopinath Bardoloi

Another Frontier Premier. He saved Assam from severance from the mother-country by his successful crusade and incidentally buried the Cabinet Mission Plan and truncated Pakistan.



Dr. P. C. Ghosh

Premier of Eastern Frontier. Bengal has communal peace, but considerable lawlessness as a result of Pakistan.

TALL BIRDS OF YESTERDAY

The Premiers of the great provinces of Indian Union



Shri Shrikrishna Sinha
(Bihar)



Shri B. G. Kher
(Bombay)



Shri Govind Ballabh Pant
(U. P.)



Shri Hare Krishna Mahtab
(Orissa)



Shri Ravishanker Shukla
(C. P.)



Shri O. P. R. Reddiar
(Madras)

Travancore which indulged in a lot of sabre rattling has sheathed its weapon. Hyderabad is lingering. This State is a landlocked one with no access to any port and therefore no possible contacts with the outside world except through a port of the Indian Union, except through Post, Telegraph and Telephone and except through its Railways. Not so a maritime State like Travancore which had some few considerations to be settled before it joined the Union. A big chunk of its revenues is derived from customs duties which, however, she already shares with Cochin and the Government of India. Even so it stands to lose a good amount of revenue and reasonable arrangements may be made by which the ports of Travancore are leased out to the Central Government of the Indian Union in perpetuity for such amount as will be consistent with Travancore's share in the burden of the nation's defence. Hyderabad has no such revenues to loose any more than any of the numerous other States which have already expressed their readiness to join the Union. Even on octroi duties reasonable agreements may be entered into with the Union which must raise its own due share of Defence expenses from every State individually. There can therefore be no reasonable excuse for any single State not joining the one or the other Union. The question of individual States joining the Indian Federation (this word is now preferred) there remains the larger question how middle grade States have to link themselves to it. These must form themselves into suitable regional groups.

The All India States' People's Conference which met at Udaipur from 31st December, 1945 to 2nd January 1946, passed a resolution on the future constitutional status of the Indian States as units of a free and Federal India. The Udaipur Resolution recommended absorption of State boundaries so as to form autonomous, and as far as possible, self-sufficient units in the proposed Federation of India.

In Standing Committee of the A. I. S. P. C. which met later in Delhi instructed all Regional Councils, under a Resolution on "Smaller States", to submit schemes for the formation of units according to the recommendations of the Udaipur Resolution. The "Smaller States" Resolution states: "Regional Councils are requested to consider Resolution No. 6 of the Udaipur Conference and to make their recommendations thereon for the consideration of the Standing Committee. These recommendations should be based on the necessity of maintaining modern standard of social and economic welfare and administrative efficiency. A consideration to be borne in mind is the linguistic and cultural basis of such a unit. The larger States which potentially fulfil these standards can form units of the Federation more or less as they are. Most of the smaller States will inevitably be absorped in large units of the Federation, which generally should be neighbouring provinces. It may be feasible and desirable in certain cases to group together a number of small States which are contiguous in order to form federal units. All these matters should be examined and reported upon with definite schemes wherever possible. When parts of a State are separated or cut off from each other it is desirable to make such redistribution as to make the State or a unit a compact area for efficient administration as well as other purposes."

So far only eight of the Deccan States have arranged to amalgamate themselves into a Union having an income of 80 lakhs, with their geographical boundaries broken down and individual rulerships abolished. The States become one State, the rulers form a board or Rajamandal with one of them according to seniority of age, as Raja pramukh—playing the part of a Constitutional Governor. The other Unions of Western India, Kathiawar, Rajputana and the Eastern Agency are all a simu lacrum of amalgamation.

(III)

But there is no ground for despair. Light is dawning upon area after area, even as the rays of sunlight take time to brighten the dark spaces of the earth.

Indeed every day that the ever-marching world covers in its journey, facts are being unfolded which reveal the possibilities of closer union of the incoming States with the Indian Federation. The abolition of the political department is followed up by the carving out of a States Department which deals however only with questions of general policy affecting the States as a whole or with cases where direct dealing between the State and Union Government have left a feeling of dissatisfaction. Otherwise member States will be on a par with member Provinces enjoying direct access to the various Depart-

ments of Government. This will put an end to the highly irritating process hitherto followed of the States having had to approach the Government of India on every single issue, big or small only through the Political Department. Today the States which join the Constituent Assembly have the satisfaction of becoming and being a part and parcel of the structure (as well as the functions) of the Government of India. A process of evolution is thus being wrought silently and effectively without all the din and dust that accompany changes under a Revolution and a few years hence when India shall have settled down as a composite political entity, our successors in Office, in the Legislatures, the Ministries, the Newspaper offices and the Political organization will begin to wonder that this happy, harmonious, homogeneous motherland of their was once harassed and divided up and since pieced together by the shrewdness of judgments, the far-sighted wisdom and perspicacity of their elders who are now engaged in the struggles of a vanishing Empire.

VIII. INDIA IRREDENTA

Trent and Trieste which constitute the Italia Irredenta of 1914 were amongst Danger Zones of Europe. In India too we have our own Irredentas. India has all along been regarded as a Dependency in the British Empire. Whenever and however long the Congress has laboured for her emancipation and Freedom, the power held in view from whose octopus grip she is to be released is Britain. Little did the Congress ever address itself to the French and the Portuguese who hold small dots of the country on either coast and exercise sway over it. Chandranagore, Yanam, Masulipatam (a small portion), Pondicherry are all French possessions on the East Coast of India and Karikal and Mahe on the West Coast, while Goa, Din and Daman to the north of the latter continue to be ruled by the Portuguese. Indeed at one time the island of Bombay belonged to the King of Portugal who gave it away as a dowry to Charles II when the latter married his daughter and the Island was acquired by the East India Company in 1668 on a rent of and 10 per annum. Bombay remained a humble settlement for 135 years i.e. till 1803 and when the Peshwa was deposed in 1818 and his Kingdom annexed, Bombay became a separate British Indian Province, while the three other places continued to be under the Portuguese.

Both the French and the Portuguese have sought to make their Indian possessions provinces of France and Portugal respectively receiving representatively from these outlying and dependent possessions into the counsels of their empires. But the civil liberties enjoyed by the Indians under either Government were seriously curtailed and in fact became extinct in the Portuguese areas.

Recent events in India have had their repercussions on these 'unredeemed' spots in India. The Goanese have fully shared in the National awakening that has overtaken the rest of India. They yearn for Indian Independence as much as the citizens of Bombay or Madras. That their Court and official language has been for a century and a half Portuguese, that their fashions and fabrics have been borrowed from the continent of Europe, not from the chalk-cliffed Albion to its West have made no difference in the political reawakening of the Goanese or their political idealism. The imprisonment and deportation of the popular Goanese leader, to Africa only served to whit the Goanese's appetite for Freedom. No movement has ever been suppressed by repression. No people have ever been suppressed by oppression. Like the movement of resurgent Nationalism elsewhere in India, in Goa also it was ridiculed at first, neglected later and finally it is repressed only to reassert itself, and spread its wings wide over the area and kindle the passion for freedom in every Goan's breast. Neither the pinch beck Imperialism of Dr. Salazar nor the irreverent out-pourings of Dr. Bossa, the Portuguese Governor General affected the Goa-Indians' determination to throw up their foreign yoke. Even the sedate mind of Gandhi addressed itself to this problem and Dr. Bossa's impudence betrayed him into the accusation against this leader, of interfering in the internal life of another sovereign Nation. In Hindusthan there is but one Nation and that is the Indian Nation. There is neither the British nor the Portuguese Nation in India and when the Britishers of Bengal have admitted themselves to be foreigners and disclaimed seats in the Constituent Assembly, there is something amusing and ludicrous, let alone the irritation and the insult in it,—when a petty officer of a pigmy State snaps his fingers at the world Teacher of the age. Buffoonery cannot go farther than this. The Goans have no political

freedom, but they have not even freedom of commerce as Dr. Bossa has made it clear. They too have their Acto Colonia which has reduced the Portuguese India into a mere slave land. India knows only the frontier on the East and the West of her 4800 mile coast line and the somewhat shorter frontier of the high Himalayans on the North. What divides Goa or Pondicherry is a toll gate represented by a rope which would be lifted on the payment of a Rupee. Otherwise Goa and Satara, Pondicherri and Villupuram have the same Maharashtra or Tamil cultures, the same historic traditions and biologic descent, the same longings and aspirations, the same goal of Freedom and Independence. It matters little today whether the range of civil liberties in the Goan areas in the West or the French areas in the East is identical or shows a difference of degree, but the spirit that unites Goa and Pondicherri with Bombay or Madras is the same that was unwisely discarded by the Goa Governor General but wisely admitted by the French Governor when the latter cheerfully admitted the right of the French possessions in India to join the Indian Union. Join they must and join they will one of these days, sooner or later, but sooner rather than later.

IX. AN ASIATIC FEDERATION

On the day of India attaining her full Independence, human aspiration tends to move on to the next step or at any rate, visualize it clearly before its mental horizon. It is very much like making a telephone call, when your eyes moves to a figure on the dial ahead of your finger. The eye and the hand work in close collaboration and close succession. The eye guides the finger and the finger directs the eye. Likewise in reading, your eye is seeing the words beyond those which your vocal apparatus is voicing. Then alone not merely continuity of clauses and phrases, but also co-ordination of syntax is correctly comprehended by the mind and 'reading' proves 'understanding'. The political problems of a country have to be read exactly as sentences are read, and have to be manipulated exactly as the telephone dial is manipulated. As your voice or as your finger or as your mind is on one the earlier words, figures or events, the eye and the mind march ahead and visualize the next words, figures or problems. Even when it was only on the threshold of Independence, the Indian Political Movement had always comprised and comprehended the wider movement sphere of Asiatic emancipation. Slavery is like an infectious disease. It is no use if your premises are kept clean. The disease of your neighbour, the contamination of his water supply and the dirt in his compound destroy the well-being, the purity and the sanitation of your own abode. What doth it avail a home or a family if its frontage is watered when the dust from the neighbour's, is blown on to your place by the next waft of breeze? An enslaved Ceylon or Singapore, Siam or Malaya, Indo China or Indonesia, Japan or Phillippines is a perpetual menace to India's freedom. That was why in the August Resolution of 1942, of the A. I. C. C. in Bombay, the Congress clearly laid down that the demand of Indian freedom implied and included the freedom of its Asiatic neighbours alike, Hindu and Buddhist, equally Muslim and Christian and was only a presage and proof thereof. Nor is such a wider study of the subject neglected. In India we had two organizations even before the National Government came into being, an official one named the Indian Institute of World Problems and a non-official one called the Indian Council of World Affairs. It was under the auspices of the latter that an Asiatic Conference was at first contemplated in the late summer of 1946 in order to establish close contact and communion between the nascent Nationalisms of Asia and develop intimate relations amongst them. It was not merely to promote an intercourse of Commerce and cultures that such a Conference was thought of, there is a higher need, namely the need to take Counsel amongst the several component nationalities as to how to reorganize the oriental civilizations, consolidate Asiatic freedom and recover for the East its legitimate place and position amongst the Nations of the World.

The idea was by no means a new one. Long years ago it was a popular idea with Congressmen. Desabandhu and Satyamurthi were taking in their own day close interest in the subject. Two successive presidents of the two Congress sessions held at Gauhati and in Madras, adverted to the subject and the Congress itself urged the convening of an Asiatic Conference at its Calcutta session (1928) held under the Presidentship of Pandit Motilal Nehru. This Asiatic Conference was to have been held in 1930 but by that time India was imersed in the Salt Satyagraha movement designed to achieve her

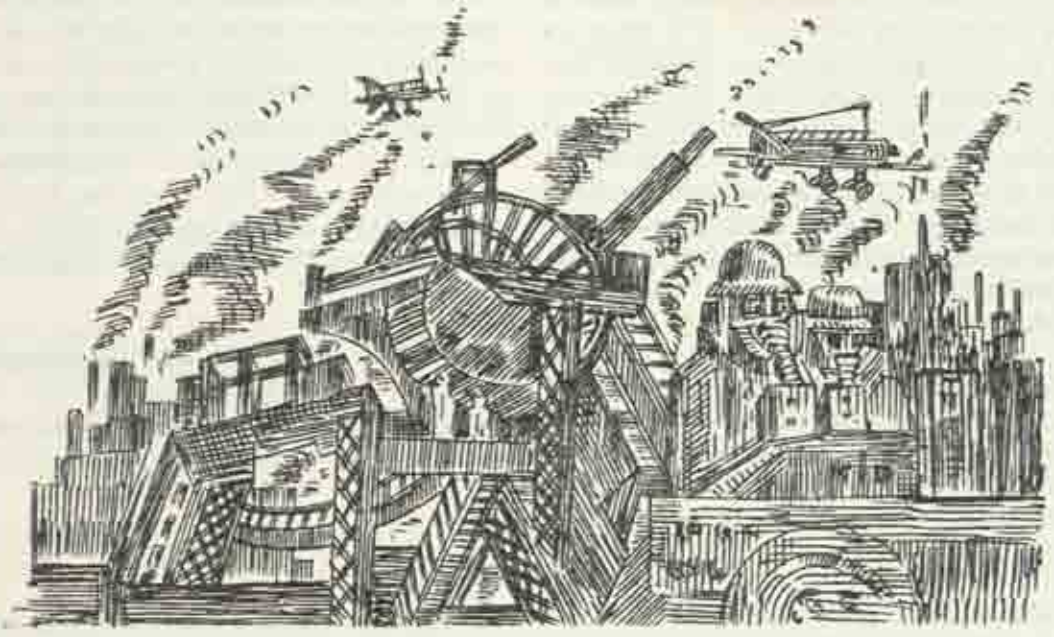
own freedom. If therefore, the idea was renewed in 1946, it was because India felt that she was already at the gateway of that Independence a dim and distant glimpse of which she was trying to catch in 1920 from the beachheads of Dandi and the seaside salt pans and deposits over the rest of the Indian Coast. What a rich synthesis of civilizations,—uplifting and multifaceted—could be carved out anew, co-ordinating the ancient with the modern, the oriental with the occidental, if only the semetic, the Aryan and the Mongolian could work together, if only Asia rose from her ageslong slumber and her daughters from her far West and far East joined hands and worked in unison to assert her individuality and her integrity in the continents of the world! Iran and Iraq, Arabia and Palestine, Afghanisthan and India, China and Japan, Ceylon and Siam, Indo China and Indonesia, Phillippines and West Indies, —would all constitute a harmonious group whose virgin resources, as yet unexplored, whose ancient traditions as yet untarnished, might well combine to raise once again the neglected and despised continent of Asia and Africa to the pinnacle of glory. The seeds of such a renaissance were sown in March, 1947 when the Asian Conference met in the ancient fort of the Pandavas in Delhi.

THE ASIAN CONFERENCE

The Conference that met at Delhi was an event of unprecedented historical significance. It attracted delegates, observers, and visitors from all corners of the continent of Asia. Elaborate arrangements for the reception had to be made and Delhi was en fete for a week.

The countries who sent Delegates were: China, Burma, Ceylone, Afghanistan, Tibet, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, Siam, Viet Nam, Malaya, Cochin China, Cambodia, Korea, Philippine, Palestine, Iraq and other Arab States, the Central Asian States of the U. S. S. R.. There were 'observers' from Australia, Egypt and Turkey.

There were a large number of women delegates. Discussions were held and decisions taken on economic, social and political subjects in the General Conference and in group meetings. A permanent body was later established under the presidentship of Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru.



CHAPTER XLI

OTHER TRENDS AND PLANS

INDUSTRIALISATION PLANS

THE foregoing chapters tend to give what is perhaps a one sided picture of the trend of development in India. The Congress has no doubt laid utmost stress on the first place of the village in our economy and it has been directly engaged in the revival of village industries and specially hand-spinning and weaving. But the Congress has not been opposed to industrialisation or big industries. There is no doubt that there are two schools in the Congress and the country and one, represented by Nehru is for 'Modern' developments in industry on the lines of the Western countries, with necessary planning to avoid the social maladjustments of the Western progress.

Hitherto, this debate has been rather academical; for there was very little chance for any big industry to be established in India in face of Government opposition. The Tata Iron and Steel Works, established by Jamshedji Tata in 1911, have been the only big industry in India and this has been nurtured and saved from premature demise by pressure of the Congress and nationalist India. Medium sized industry, the textile mills and other works have owed their birth and growth to constant political agitation, Swadeshi and boycott inaugurated by the Congress.

It is true that with the coming of Gandhiji there was an ideological change in the Congress attitude towards industrialisation. This was partly the recognition of the need for self-help in giving more employment and even a little more income to the people in the villages; partly it was a historical development. This, latter, has been pointed out by Nehru:

"Possibly there is a difference in emphasis, a realisation of certain human and economic factors which were overlooked previously in India. Indian industrialists and the politicians who supported them thought too much in terms of the nineteenth century development of capitalists industry in Europe and

ignored many of the evil consequences that were obvious in the twentieth century. In India, because normal progress had been arrested for a hundred years, those consequences were likely to be more far-reaching. The kind of medium-scale industries that were being started in India, under the prevailing economic system, resulted not in absorbing labour but in creating more unemployment. While capital accumulated at one end, poverty and unemployment increased at the other. Under a different system and with a stress on big-scale industries absorbing labour, and with planned development this might well have been avoided."

Also the conditions in India were such that relief to the mass of our people, the raising of the villager's standard, by however little, was a dire necessity. The rehabilitation of the cottage industry under these conditions was the only practical plan. Thus according G. D. H. Cole:

"Gandhi's campaign for the development of the home-made cloth industry is no mere fad of a romantic, eager to revive the past, but a practical attempt to relieve the poverty and uplift the standard of village."

A similar conviction has recently been expressed by Dr. John Mathai, one of the authors of the Bombay Plan.

Gandhiji's ideas about the use of machinery also seem to have undergone change. As for Nehru, his preference is clear:

"I am all for tractors and big machinery and I am convinced that the rapid industrialization of India is essential to relieve the pressure on land, to combat poverty and raise standards of living, for defence, and a variety of other purposes. But I am equally convinced that the most careful planning and adjustment are necessary if we are to reap the full benefit of industrialization and avoid many of its dangers."

(Nehru: Discovery of India.)

Planned Economy and Post War Plans

The idea and practice of planning for integrated social and economic objectives came to India—as to the world—with the establishment of the socialist State of the U.S.S.R. The pioneer of planning in India is Sir M. Visvesarayya, who had written a book "Re-constructing India" as early as 1920. He has been since then constantly focussing public opinion to the need of 'Willed, planned and systematic' development of industry. Later under his guidance, the All-India Manufacturer's Organisation put forth and tried to work a Five-Year Plan for the development of India, with a program of two new heavy industries for each province and cottage industries for every district.

We have briefly dealt with the National Planning Committee formed by the Congress and how it ultimately languished after the imprisonment of Nehru in 1942, in an earlier chapter.

Bombay Plan

During the War, the Government has been busy in preventing the industrial development in the country, that was natural otherwise. After the War, there was a wide-spread discussion on the subject of international plans for reconstruction after war devastation and in a new world set-up. The echo of these ideas came to give rise to several official and non-official Plans. The most remarkable of these Plans was that outlined by eight well known industrialists and economists, mostly of Bombay. The present Indian Minister for Finance is supposed to have been the brain behind this "Bombay" or Tata-Birla Plan.

The main object of the plan is to remove chronic poverty, to raise the purchasing power of the people, and to treble the national income during a period of 15 years. To achieve this increase, the plan proposes to raise the net output of agriculture to a little over twice the present figure and that of industry, to approximately five times the present output. The planners of course postulate at the outset a National Government.

The Bombay Plan has the modest aim of securing a general standard of living which would leave a reasonable margin over minimum requirements of human life. This will mean provisions for:

(1) balanced diet, (2) clothing, (3) housing, (4) public health, (5) sanitation and water supply,

(6) medical facilities, (7) minimum education, etc. Sources of finance for this Plan are as follows—(1) Hoarded wealth of the country, (2) short term loan to U. K. such as Sterling Securities, (3) favourable balance of trade, (4) foreign borrowing, (5) savings of the people, (6) new money created against ad-hoc securities, i.e., on the inherent credit of the government.

The authors of the Bombay Plan later issued a part II. The main features are as follows:

(1) India should be regarded as one economic unit including Indian States.

(2) The State planning and private enterprise should be suitably intermingled.

(3) The State control is more important than State ownership.

(4) Standards of living should be raised, a minimum wage established and social services expanded.

(5) The State aid for industries should be conditional upon fixation of prices, limitation of dividends, prescription of conditions of work and wages for labour, nomination of government directors, licensing and auditing.

(6) A steeply-graduated income-tax and death duties are recommended.

(7) The landlords would go.

The central idea of the second part of the Bombay Plan is a happy compromise between State Socialism and Capitalism, in which private enterprise and organisation would be directed and controlled by a national government responsible to the people.

Another plan was brought forth by Mr. M. N. Roy at this time, which he called the People's Plan. This was a ten years plan to provide for the satisfaction of the immediate and the basic needs of the Indian people, in respect of food, clothing, shelter, health and education. The basis of the planned economy was to be agriculture. It recommended nationalisation of Lands, Mines, Fisheries, Banking and Foreign Trade. Agriculture was to be mechanised through collective farming. Consumers-goods industries were to be emphasised and started with State finances.

Government Plans

Before the Interim Government was established at the centre an all-India plan for a period of 15 years had been prepared by the Government of India. The planning was done for India as a whole and under the then existing constitution. The Interim Government took up the work of development and made good progress in several directions. Later with the division of the country and the disturbed conditions that followed it, further progress was greatly hampered. But with freedom and restoration of peace, it may be taken for granted that the plans, with necessary modifications and expansion will go forward rapidly under Nehru's Government.

According to the official plan, long-term projects mean: (1) the development of electric power as the basis of industrial development and to a lesser extent of agricultural development, pump irrigation and rural industry; (2) the development of industry with special reference to the production of capital goods and the consumer's goods, required by the bulk of the population, and also the maintenance and development of small-scale and cottage industries; (3) the development of road communications and transport service on a comprehensive scale, specially in rural areas; (4) the improvement of agriculture and with it the development of irrigation, anti-erosion measures, land reclamation, etc.

The foundation of improved education, health and housing must be laid at the same time, because they are pre-requisite for development of industry, agriculture, etc.

In the social service schemes, two noteworthy plans are before the Government; the Sargent scheme for Education and Bhore Committees scheme for Health.

Educational Development

The scheme, based on the memorandum prepared by Sir John Sargent, Educational Adviser to the Government of India aims at providing all children

of India with a certain basic education and enabling those who show promise to pass on to High School, Universities and other institutions for further education. It also meets the requirements of the country for technical education side by side with practical training. The scheme deals with various stages of School and University education, technical commercial, art and adult education: the problem of the training of teachers; the health of school children; the education of the handicapped; and recreative and social activities.

Public Health Plan

A comprehensive and rational public health and medical services policy for the country as a whole was issued by Bhore Committee. This Committee of All-India Health Survey and Development suggests a Rs. 1,000 crore expenditure over next 10 years. Personal health services, including directional organisation, professional education and other items are estimated to cost Rs. 163 crores in the first five years, is estimated at Rs. 40 crores and Rs. 62 crores in the second five year period. The annual per capita expenditure will be Re. 1-3-11 during the first five years period and Rs. 2-6-6 during the next. The Committee aims at a target of one doctor for every 2,000 citizens.

The target is to be reached in 1971.

Expansion of Scientific Research

One of the first acts of the National Government has been to take up a plan for wide expansion of scientific research activities. The following seven national laboratories have been inaugurated and their foundation laid—(1) Ceramic and Glass Research Laboratory at Calcutta; (2) National Chemical Laboratory at Poona; (3) National Physical Laboratory at Delhi; (4) National Metallurgical Laboratory at Jamshedpur; (5) Fuel Research Station near Dhanbad; (6) Road Research Station at Delhi; (7) Building Research Station at Roorkee.

Education Department is proceeding with development of a number of technical institutes which include four institutes of Technology on the lines of Messachusetts Institute of Technology, America. Other proposals include a Central Engineering College, a college for teachers in Technology and domestic science and a college for physical education.

Training Schemes

Training schemes have been actively pursued. Several hundred students have already been sent overseas, for technical training on Government stipends.

Land Development

There are two ways to progress on the land: cultivate more and makes better use of that already under cultivation. To these ends, a beginning has been made backed by the "grow more food" campaign. In order to bring more land under cultivation and to increase productions from land already cultivated, there will have to be a great increase in irrigation. Present proposal includes the reorganisation of the Central Board of Irrigation and the appointment of a Consulting Engineer for Irrigation. Soil conservation which means contour binding, afforestation, anti-erosion measures, dry farming, reclamation of water-logged and salted lands, draining of coastal land, etc., is another important item of the scheme. In order to encourage the cultivation of additional land to upgrade the means and technique of production, the market value of agriculture commodities will have to be established at a price level that will ensure adequate production. A plan for the adequate development of agriculture and animal management has been under consideration with the immediate object of increasing production by 50 per cent. within the next ten years, and by 100 per cent. in fifteen years. Finance involved will amount to ten thousand million rupees with an additional annual expenditure of two hundred and fifty million rupees.

A high priority has been given for food production schemes, but only because 80 per cent of the people get there livelihood from agriculture, but because of the difficult food situation and depedence on imported food after the war.

There are other plans already afoot for the development of Forests, Fisheries, Road Communication, Inland water transport, Postal Services, Civil Aviation, Electric Power and Indian Shipping. There are extensive Railway plans.



The Road that leads no-where.

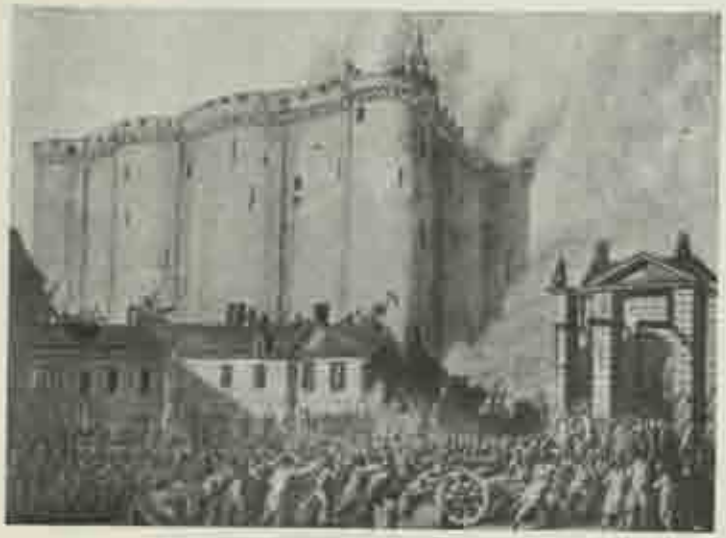
In Hiroshima, the road that once led through its teeming streets to the great Mitsubishi Chemical Works now trails away to nothing in the miles of rubble. It is symbolical of our civilisation and progress.

PROGRESS !

In the battle of Waterloo only 37 tons shells were exchanged the whole of the Boar war absorbed a nights bombload of 1914. But not even a raid of 1000 super fortresses could have killed the 90,000 people at Hiroshima or the 40,000 at Nagaski. The atom bomb as used at Hiroshima and Nagaski is certainly not the last word in atomic weapons.

Infact, the combination of atomic energy (both as a source of motive power and striking power) with robot devices foreshadows weapons with a global power range and a striking power which would enable mankind to commit suicide at will.

(E. N. Fredwold.)



Taking of the Bastille

The symbol of the Great French Revolution.

TWO EVENTS
THAT HAVE BEEN
A PERINNIAL SOURCE OF
INSPIRATION IN INDIA'S
STUGGLE FOR
FREEDOM



America Declares Independence

The historical event that marks the era of progress in a great country.

Irrigation and Waterways Plan

The most promising development, one that might transform the face of the country, is expected from the major irrigation cum-Power projects. The future of India's industrial and agricultural developments depend on cheap power.

India now promises to be one of the leading countries of the world in the development of hydro-electric power and great strides in this direction have already been made. Her potentialities for hydro-electric development is estimated at some 39 million horse-power out of the world total of 300 millions. Only about a half million horse-power has so far been harnessed. The biggest hydro-electric undertakings are the three schemes developed and brought into operation by the Indian firm of Tata & Sons. These schemes have a continued normal capacity of 246,000 horse-power and provide electrical energy for the city of Bombay, Thana, Kalyan and greater Poona. The scheme has also been developed in Mysore, Kashmir, Madras, United Provinces, Punjab and Travancore.

Projects under consideration.—The following new projects now are under consideration—namely, the Bhakra and Nagal in the Punjab, Nayar and Rihand in the U. P., Kosi in Nepal, Damodar in Bihar, Tista in Bengal, Mahanadi in Orissa, Machkund, Godavari and Tungavadra in Madras. These schemes will provide 4 million killowatts of which Kosi Project alone may account for a million and a half.

The work on these important projects has already been taken up and is being pursued with great zeal and urgency. The blue prints of these colossal constructive adventures and the story of subjugating lofty mountains and mighty rivers and harnessing them to the country's prosperity make a facinating study. If we look at one of them, the Damodar Valley Project, we have an idea of what is coming.

The following are the chief features of this project:

(1) The multi-purpose project will provide perrinial irrigation for 8000,000 acres and generate a peak load of some 300,000 kilwatts.

(2) It will benefit more than 5 million people in the rural area and more than two million of urban population.

(3) The project will facilitate navigation on the Hooghly upto Raniganj coal-field area.

(4) It will provide regular supply of fish all along its route.

A Damodar Valley Corporation modelled on the now famous T.V.A. and modified to suit Indian conditions, is being created.

INDIAN YOUTH AND THE FUTURE

Kumari Chandralekha Pandit

After years of bitter struggle in which she fought for liberty and the democratic way of life not only for herself but for suffering humanity everywhere, India has emerged at the cross-roads and now awaits the new era of greater political freedom which must inaugurate the age of equal opportunities, health and education for the Indian millions if real independence is to be achieved. For the act of transference of power from Great Britain to India cannot in itself usher in the Utopia of our dreams. It can but unbar the way to freedom—a freedom which we must train and educate ourselves to use and enjoy to the best of our ability, in accordance with our declared policy for the welfare and progress of our country and our people. This gigantic task is both a privilege and a duty and towards its fulfilment young Indians must harness their education and experience.

The student community of India has played an important and vital part in the continuous struggle against British Imperialism. Ever since Gandhiji's appeal in 1919 urging people to boycott British and Government-aided institutions, young men and women have sacrificed their chances of formal education and, as a result of this, of success in professions and financial security, in order to take up their stand as soldiers of the nation. Many continued their studies but broke away from the ivory tower of academic learning to add their share of non-co-operation to the civil disobedience movements; they faced police fire, they endured imprison-

ment and they emerged from each phase of the struggle willing to dedicate their lives to the national cause. Some day when the true history of the Indian connection with Great Britain is published, the role of students in the general national awakening, comparable to the resistance movements of young people fighting the Nazis in Europe, will be honoured.

India is at a crucial period of her history. Indeed she is in a paradoxical position—on the one hand she has been acclaimed the leader of Asian and indeed liberal opinion in the realm of international affairs. For long the unofficial champion of suppressed people everywhere, she now commands international attention. And yet her domestic affairs retard and hinder her potential greatness. I do not allude to the fast weakening British influence here, but to our own tragic inability to end the political bitterness which has permeated national life and to our failure to use combined talent for the solution of the myriad vital problems of food, clothing, shelter and appalling ignorance. No sensitive individual can fail to be acutely distressed by the internal trends prevalent in the country. The question before the student is therefore: "What can I do to help?" It is a problem which needs careful and unemotional consideration, logic rather than sentiment. I would like to share some stray views on this urgent problem.

We Indians are a people easily aroused by slogans and speeches. Past centuries of unthinking religious observance, poverty, ignorance, intense patriotism have combined to form the psychology of the average Indian today. We are too easily swayed by words and too easily do we reconcile ourselves to suffering. Our fatalism must now be ended. The future cannot depend on those who place their trust in the stars or in words. Only through constructive work can we build up the dormant strength of this land and its people. Therefore the first thing is to stop talking. To my mind too many conferences and conventions, too many leaders, merely add chaos to the already confused state of affairs. Although I believe firmly in freedom of speech and opinion, I believe equally firmly in our duty towards unifying diverse elements in the country. Unification is impossible so long as groups of persons, however capable and well meaning, go around the country speaking, in my opinion, in a somewhat irresponsible manner of the vital issues before the nation. Student conferences of the past have drawn up elaborate "constructive programmes" and manifestos and have received publicity through the press. However, when the concrete results of the speeches and the emotional fervour invoked by them is calculated, what results have we? Has the country benefitted? Have an appreciable number of kissans and mazdurs been made literate or been given medical aid by student groups? The answer is decidedly in the negative. For, although some students everywhere have worked out the much discussed constructive programme, most students have forgotten about the pledges and duties towards the very kisans and mazdurs for whom they claim independence. Therefore my suggestion would be to decrease the amount and intensity of useless "political" activity such as the organizing of innumerable conferences.

Secondly, there is no reason why every young Indian should aim to rise in politics. Many are not fitted for political work, many are talented in other directions. Emphasis on things political has been necessary in the past because it was obvious that only with political independence could we achieve economic and social independence. Now we look forward to a period when talent is required to develop the country. The age of processions and speeches must be superseded by that of labour. Service to the Motherland does not mean the ability to deliver an inflammatory speech. It means being able to use one's strength, mental and physical, in assisting in the great renaissance of Indian life. There is need for teachers, doctors, chemists, engineers, dramatists, journalists, social workers. We wish for our people a free and democratic way of life, and democracy means initially, equal opportunity for all citizens—and in order to inculcate this idea in the new India it is imperative first for us to develop ourselves according to the opportunities open to us and then to be equipped to serve the nation, not with empty words but with actual work. There is no need to be vocally aggressive in one's patriotism. "Patriotism is not enough". It is the harnessing of energy and nationalistic zeal towards the progressive development of our people which alone is worthy of being called national service. We have before us the example of nations who have struggled and are today struggling towards greater freedom through the advancement of their nation. It is up to us, the young people of India, to literally build up our country to its rightful place in the world.

CHAPTER XLII

SOCIALISM OBJECTIVE

Shri Jai Prakash Narain

NO intelligent person today will doubt that the next stage in the evolution of human society is socialism. But there will not be a like agreement on the question, 'What is Socialism'. Different theories of socialism and different pictures of a socialist society have been presented from time to time by socialist thinkers and workers. These differences are reduced somewhat when one takes into consideration only one of the several broad schools of socialist thought. Thus, if we accept Marxism, or belong to the Marxist School, as I do, the differences are greatly narrowed down, but they are by no means removed or obliterated. There are socialist movement in the world today professing allegiance to Marx that widely differ among themselves, even quarrel and fight with one another. The Stalinists and Trotskyists, for instance, both profess to march under the banner of Marxism, but they not only differ from each other, but are even thirsty for each other's blood. Which of these two "Marxian" schools presents a true picture of socialism? Those who belong to neither of these warring camps would doubtless say, neither.

In our own country the Communists and Royists both swear by Marx, but we have seen the kind of "socialist" policy they have followed in the name of Marx. We have seen that to them Marxism included even working as hirelings of Maxwell and spying over Indian revolutionaries. Moreover, both these "Marxist" groups are each other's bitter enemies. There are other little groups too in this country flying Marxist colours, but never agreeing among themselves as to what is Marxism.

It seems to me, therefore, that in view of all this confusion and rival claims, the socialist movement in India must evolve its own picture of socialism in the light of Marxist thought, of world history since Marx's death and of conditions in this country and our historical background. Marxism is a science of society and a scientific method of social change, that includes social revolution. As such, there can be no room for dogmatism or fundamentalism in Marxist thought. Those who on the one hand call Marxism scientific and on the other introduce dogmatism into it do it great disservice. In science there is no such thing as final truth. Science progresses by the progressive elimination of untruth from human knowledge. If Marxism is a science, Marx could not have expounded ultimate truths, but only made approximations to them. Today with a vastly developed store of human knowledge and vastly greater experience and observation of capitalist society, we are in a position to make far nearer approximations to the truth than Marx. The unending merit of Marx, however, is that he has given us a method to understand and change history even as Darwin gave us a method of understanding life. Darwinism and Marxism were born almost together, but not even the most ardent Darwinist today believes in the theories of evolution as they were propounded by Darwin. Yet he would proudly call himself a Darwinist. My professor of Biology at Wisconsin ranked the *Origin of the Species* only next to the Bible amongst the world's books, but he never thought for a moment that he was being disloyal to his master when he proceeded to show where modern research had proved Darwin false or only partially true. It is open in the same manner for a Marxist to give not the second but even the first rank to "Capital" and yet to seek to develop and refine the partial truths of Marxism.

II

With these introductory remarks let me turn now to the subject in hand. The creation of a socialist society involves two stages: the stage of the transition, and the stage when socialism has been established. It is obvious that the form of the transitional period will be determined by present conditions and final objectives, that is, the final picture of socialism in view.

I shall consider here only the final picture of socialism.

The objectives of socialism are: elimination of exploitation and poverty: provision of equal opportunities to all for self-development; full development of the meterial and moral resources of society and utilization of these resources in accordance to the needs and wishes of society as a whole rather than in accordance to the dictates of profit; equitable apportionment of national wealth and social, educational and other services between all who labour and serve society.

A system of social organisation that serves these ends is a Socialist society. Anything that does not is not socialism. No preconceived theories, no matter by whom propounded, need detain or confuse us if they do not subserve these ends in practice.

Vital Changes

I believe that these ends can be achieved only if certain vital changes are made in existing society and the economic and political organisation of the future society is based on the foundations described below.

First of all, there must be complete political freedom. There could be no socialism in India under British rule. This point needs no emphasis now.

Second, there should be no privileged economic or political class, as at present, i.e., a self-perpetuating class wielding economic and political power. In other words, the "ruling" Princes and the zemindars (not the peasant farmers of the Punjab but the landholders of U. P., Bihar and some other Provinces) and the capitalists must be made to surrender their economic and political power and privilege.

After the removal of the British power, the abolition of Princes and of the zamindari and capitalist systems should be a comparatively simpler problem. If the Indian people proved strong enough to destroy the British Raj in India, nothing could stop them from destroying feudalism and capitalism if they desired to do so. The only limiting factor would be the stage of development of the political consciousness of the masses. In other words, if the socialist movement were to become strong enough to move the masses in the right direction, all these changes could be made without much difficulty or opposition.

Abolition of Princedom hardly raises any technical problem for socialism to solve. Bourgeois society has the solution ready at hand, and we could draw upon the history of bourgeois revolutions. The Princes will only have to be removed from their *gadis* and reduced to the status of the ordinary citizen and their States made part of regions scientifically determined with due regard to geography, economic resources and cultural affinities.

Abolition of the zamindari system is also only the first step in a socialist reorganization of our agrarian economy which indeed involves rather difficult questions of theory and practice. By merely saying that there will be no zamindars in socialist India, we say practically nothing as to the real form of socialist agriculture we wish to develop in this country. I shall describe below the main outlines of our socialised agricultural economy as I visualize it.

Abolition of capitalism is undoubtedly a great step forward towards socialism, but by itself it can hardly be called socialism. It is merely a negative half of which the positive half has yet to be created. In what manner capitalism will be abolished and what will take its place will determine to a large extent the kind of socialism that we are going to have. I shall try to give below the picture I have in mind of socialist industry in this country.

To a consideration of agriculture and industry I shall have to add a few words about banking and trade. That would give us a fair picture of socialist economy. The political half of my picture would then remain to be drawn up. I shall first deal with the economic part of my picture.

III

Let me take up agriculture first.

The land system in this country are complicated beyond description, but they all agree more or less in exploiting the tiller of the soil in the interest of a small landed and moneyed class. All these systems have to be scrapped completely and a new system created in their place. In building up socialist agriculture we will have to pass through two stages

—the co-operative and collective stage, I shall naturally deal here only with the first stage.

After the abolition of zamindari, there will be a re-distribution of land with a view to breaking up big holdings and making the smaller holdings economic. No peasant would have more than a certain maximum acreage of land, let us say, 30 acres, and none less than five. No one shall be allowed to own land who does not reside in the village and actually till his land. The unit of agricultural economy would be the village. The legal ownership of land would vest with the village, as a whole, and the village panchayat would have the power, according to laws made by the State, to settle its lands with individual peasants. Thus the peasants will have a sort of proprietory rights over the land settled with them. Present proprietory rights will be respected except where found necessary to alter them in order to bring about a fairer redistribution of land and remove gross inequalities at both ends. But the proprietory rights would be restricted merely to the right of the peasant to receive from the produce of the village land his share in accordance to the size of his holding. No peasant will be allowed to sell land to anyone except to the *gram panchayat*. Peasants will not be allowed to carry on cultivation and other farming operations separately. Each *gram panchayat*, among other things, will also function as a farmer's co-operative. The co-operative will conduct all farming operations including buying, selling and borrowing. All who labour in the fields will receive wages in kind or money according to the wage laws of the State and the produce will be distributed after deducting costs according to the size of holding.

Collectivism

This is the co-operative stage of socialist farming. The next stage is the collective stage in which no individual proprietory rights in agricultural lands (in Russia each collective farmer is allowed to own privately up to three acres of land around his homestead for kitchen gardening, raising poultry or other similar purposes) are recognised and all lands pertaining to a village, or farming unit, are owned and run by village collectives. In Russia collectivisation was pushed through at great human cost and under a ruthless dictatorship. Estimates run up to as high a figure as twenty millions of those who had to be "liquidated" in order to make collectivisation a success. I do not favour such a colossal repression of the toiling peasant masses, nor does socialist theory permit it.

Abolition of landlordism, re-distribution of land and breaking up of big holdings would require State coercion to be used against fifteen to twenty per cent of the agricultural population perhaps. But collectisation might require sixty to seventy per cent of that population to be repressed. I do not find any justification for any political party, speaking and acting in the name of the toiling masses, to indulge in such wholesale repression. Twenty per cent may be coerced in the interest of the remaining eighty per cent, but there is no justification for repressing seventy per cent of the peasants even "for their own good" Co-operative farming itself would require a good measure of coercion. But in that case a wise mixture of coercion and persuasion, as also concession of certain economic advantages might be, and I am sure will be, found to be sufficient. Collectivisation on the other hand would require a degree of wholesale repression that is repugnant to socialism, which above all is the expression of the will of the toiling masses. Therefore, collectivisation will follow as the second stage and its pace would be necessarily slower and adjusted to the results of propaganda and demonstration. I need not, however, emphasise that new agricultural colonies and settlements need not pass from the co-operative to the collective stage. They can and will be put on a collective basis from the start.

Conversion of peasant agricultural economy into the sort of co-operative economy described above would result in a considerable part of the present agricultural population being thrown out of employment. Place will have to be found for this surplus agrarian population in industry, particularly in industries subsidiary to farming.

Industry

We turn now to a consideration of socialist industry. I visualize two types of industries in a socialist India, large scale and small scale. It goes without saying that both large and small industries together with agriculture will form parts of a balanced national economy, democratically managed and controlled.

All large industries would be owned and managed by the Federal or Provincial Governments. Representatives of trade unions would have appropriate voice in the Management from the lowest to the highest levels.

I visualize all small industries to be organized into Producers' Co-operatives who would own and manage their industries. Apart from passing legislation for the regulation of these co-operatives, the State will not interfere with their work. These industries will include subsidiary agricultural industries as well as existing and new handicrafts and other small industries.

I visualize and advocate another type of industrial ownership apart from State ownership and Producers' Co-operatives; that is, municipal or community owner ship. A township or a city may own and manage, if not large, middling and small industries. The representatives of the workers in these communityowned industries would naturally have adequate voice in their management.

I advocate development of these co-operatives and community owned industries, first., because I do not believe it is possible to find employment for many years to come for our surplus population, which would swell further at least by twenty per cent by the Revolution in agriculture in large industry alone secondly, because I desire to prevent the State from acquiring the sole monopoly in industry and employment. The State under socialism threatens, as in Russia, far from withering away, to become an all powerful tyrant maintaining a strangle-hold over the entire life of the citizen. This leads to totalitarianism of the type we witness in Russia today. By dispersing the ownership and management of industry and by developing the village into a democratic village republic, we break this strangle-hold to a very large extent and attenuate the danger of totalitarianism.

Trade

In the field of trade I have the following picture in mind. Foreign trade will be entirely in the hands of the State.

Internal trade will be shared between the State, the local community, and the co-operatives.

All banking will be in the hands of the State.

Here then is the economic picture in my socialist India.

Co-operative farming run by *gram panchayats*.

Collective farms in new settlements.

Large-scale industry owned and managed by the State.

Community-owned and managed industry.

Small industry organised into Producers' Co-operatives.

The State

I come now to the Political part of my picture.

The State in socialist India must be a full democratic State. There can be no socialism without democracy. It is a common mistake these days to think that there must be dictatorship of the proletariat in a socialist state. This is against the teaching of Marx. The dictatorship of the proletariat has a place only in the transitional period from capitalism to socialism. And in this period too it is not inevitable in every case. Marx visualized a capitalist state, such as England, where political democracy was in full vogue and there was no large standing army, where democratic processes could be used to bring about socialism. But apart from such rare cases, dictatorship of the proletariat has been considered in Marxian thought as essential for the transitional period. It is, however, the very essence of, Marxism, that once the transition is over the State must become a fully democratic institution. When the old ruling classes have been destroyed and society has been converted entirely into a society of workers, it is idiotic to talk of a dictatorship of the proletariat because the proletariat cannot dictatate to itself.

Let me stop here to say a word further about the dictatorship of the proletariat. Whether our transition in India from present society to socialism takes the democratic or dictatorial form—I personally think it would take the democratic form—it should be remembered that dictatorship of the proletariat

in Marxist theory does not mean the dictatorship of a single party, such as the Communist party in Russia. It means the dictatorship of a class, or in industrially backward countries such as India and post-Czarist Russia, of a combination of the toiling classes, such as the workers, and peasants and the lower middle class. These classes may have one or more political parties and these parties must all be united in the dictatorship or have freedom to function freely under the dictatorship. The dictatorship of the proletariat never meant that parties of the working class or other toilers would be suppressed; it meant only the suppression of the ruling classes and their political and economic institutions.

Coming back to the question of democracy under socialism, it is necessary to explain in some detail what this democracy should mean concretely. First of all, it should mean that there will be no one party rule and that there might be more than one political party of the working people and that the workers, the industrial and peasant co-operatives, the trade unions, etc., might form different political parties and that these parties should function freely. It should mean that there should be full freedom for expression of opinion and to form voluntary organizations for political purposes. The trade union, the local communities, the co-operatives and other such corporate bodies of the working people might have their own news papers and broadcasting systems and conduct their own schools and educational institutions.

Democracy under socialism should further mean that the trade unions should not be limbs of the State and subservient to it, but independent bodies supporting the State, and also exercising a check over the government of the day. In Russia the trade unions have no independence whatever and have been subjected to the will of the State on the theory that the State being a workers' state, all workers' organisations must be subject to it. Here the State and government have been confused. A particular State may be a workers' State, but the government of the day might be making mistakes and wilfully or unwilfully acting contrary to the workers' interests. In that case there must be independent organs of the working class, such as trade unions—and in a socialist society the trade unions will be second in importance only to the Government itself—in a position to check or correct or change the government in power.

V

Thus my picture of a socialist India is the picture of an economic and political democracy. In this democracy men will neither be slaves to capitalism nor to a party or the State. Man will be free. He will have to serve society which will provide him with employment and the means of livelihood, but within limits he will be free to choose his avocation and station in life. He will be free to express his opinions and there will be opportunities for him to rise to his full moral stature.

There will be no great difference between man and man—except the difference of physical and mental endowments—for there will be no great difference in incomes.



FIFTY-FOURTH SESSION—Meerut, 1946

President: Acharya J. B. Kripalani

Chairman, Reception Committee:
Chaudhary Raghubir Narain Singh.

General Secretaries: Mridula Sarabhai
and Dr. B. V. Keskar. *Delegates*: 2950.

President

Devoted his early life as educationist. Professor in Muzaffarpur College in Bihar. Associated with Gandhiji in Champaran Satyagrah. Greatly influenced the Youth in favour of National service in Bihar. Later joined Benares Hindu University in 1919. Was in charge of Gujrat Vidyapith 1922-27. Organised and ran the Merrut Gandhi Ashram centre of constructive work. Service in Bihar Earthquake. General Secretary of the Congress 1934-46. Married Sucheta in 1934. Author of books on Gandhian ideology. Last imprisonment in 1942 August movement. President of the Congress in 1946. Resigned Congress Presidentship in November 1947 on important issues of policy of the Congress Goverument.

Details of the Session

This session to be held after 6 years was to be organised on a grand scale as the 'Diamond Jubilee Session', but owing to the breakout of communal riots at this time in Meerut, only a small session confined to delegates and few visitors was actually held. The Reception Committee arrangements and to be cancelled in the main. No exhibition was held. Representatives of Indians Overseas and others attended this Congress, from Fiji, Malaya, Singapore, British Guiana, Kenya and India League in London. Large number of visitors attended the session and the A. I. C. C. Pandal where the open session was also held full to the capacity. The nagar was marked by artistic gateways erected by a batch from Santiniketan under the direction of Nandita Kripalani and the life in the Nagar was enlivened by the I. N. A. orchestra and stage plays under Capt. Ram Singh of the I. N. A. General Shah Nawaz was in charge of the volunteers corps and turned out a ver impressive rally. The Congress was held when the League had joined the Interim Government and the riots had begun to spread.

Condolence resolution took note of many deaths of great leaders in the past years, P. Malviya, Vijayaraghavachariar, Srinivasa Iyengar, Rabindranath Tagore, Jamnalal Bazaz, Bhulabhai Desai, Satyamurti, Shiv Prasad Gupta, R. S. Pandit, and several others. A retrospective resolution reviewed the events of the past six years and a half, payed its homage to those who had died or suffered for the country and took note of the suffering of the people during war years, by repression, maladministration and famine. It expressed alarm at the trends of international developments and at the appearance of the atomic bomb as a new weapon of war, and expressed once again the Congress ideal of peace and international justice and peace. The Congress ratified the decision of the Working Committee with regard to Constituent Assembly and Interim Government. There were resolutions on South and East Africa and of greetings to Indonesian Republic, and on the States. The Congress adopted the principles and program in the Congress Election Manifesto and the August Resolution with regard to the contents of Swaraj. The resolution on communal strife expressed horror at the happenings in Bengal, Bihar and parts of Meerut District and lay the responsibility on the preaching of hatred and violence for political purposes. The Congress warned the country against such propaganda and urged the necessity of security and rehabilitation. Resolution on changes in Congress Constitution authorised the A. I. C. C. to make amendments to make Congress more widely representative of the people.

The Statue of Liberty has been a symbol of American Democracy and a hope & promise for all people of the world.



Three great Americans who have been citizens of 'One World' and friends of all suppressed people and of the cause of Indian Freedom.



Wendell Willkie



Louis Fischer



Pearl Buck

GREAT LEADERS OF AMERICAN HISTORY.



George Washington



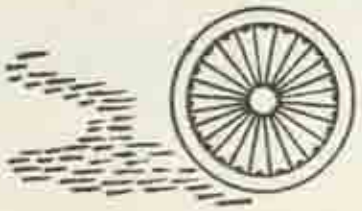
Abraham Lincoln

The idealism and statesmanship of these and other American leaders upholding Freedom.



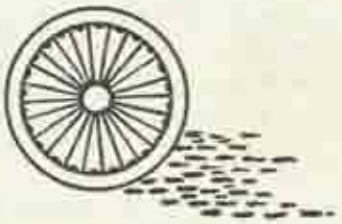
Woodrow Wilson

Unity and Democracy have sustained and guided the Indian people in their struggle.



CHAPTER XLIII

INDIA IN WORLD POLITICS



Sri R. Palme Dutt

> "Between Indian nationalism, Indian freedom and British Imperialism, there can be no common ground and if we remain within the imperialist field, whatever our name or status, whatever outward semblance of political power may we have, we remain cribbed and confined and allied to and dominated by reactionary forces of the great vested interests of the Capitalist World".
>
> JAWAHARLAL NEHRU,
> *Presidential address to the Lucknow Congress, 1936.*

THROUGHOUT the modern era ever since the first European navigators at the end of the 15th Century revealed the unity of the globe, India has been in the centre of the world politics. The wealth of India was the praise and object of the European colonising powers; and they only stumbled on America (as the very name "West Indies" for the land they reached across the Atlantic revealed) in the search for an alternative sea-route to India. Through the following centuries world history has been built up round the issue of the domination of India. Behind the successive struggles of Britain with Spain and Portugal, and with Holland, with France, with Russia and Germany can be traced the issue of the route to India and the domination of India. This aspect of India's role in world politics—as the object of politics of other powers as the prize, the battleground, the pawn, instrument and the strategic base has continued into our time.

But it is only in the last half a century and especially in the last quarter of a century with the further development of the national movement that there has arisen, for the first time, the beginnings of an Indian foreign policy—the beginning of the awakening of the Indian people to an independent role in world politics which is destined to be a great role in the future.

The old situation of India as the object of Imperialism in world politics is still important to study because it still powerfully affects the actual situation and provides the background of the problems of the national movement in the sphere of international politics.

The concentration of British world strategy around the pivot of the domination of India can be traced with increasing clearness through the past two centuries. The 18th century wars of Britain and France revolved primarily, not so much around the kaleidoscope of the shifting European constellations which appeared as their immediate cause, but around the struggle for the New World and for the domination of India. The loss of the United States increased the importance of India.

When Napolean directed his expeditions to Egypt and the Near East, he had before him visions of the advance to India. Through the 19th Century Russia appeared as the bogey extending ever farther over Asia and threatening India. When Britain abandoned isolation at the beginning of the 20th Century, the first step in the abandonment of isolation was the alliance with Japan, and the revised Anglo-Japanese Treaty, when it was renewed, contained the formula for Japanese assistance in maintaining British domination in India. The conflict with

Germany turned especially on the control of the Middle East, opening up the way to India.

India has throughout provided the inexhaustible reservoir for Britain, alike of material and of human resources, not only for its own conquest, but for the whole policy of Asiatic countries or even beyond the confines of Asia, and charged to India. A British Military Officer wrote in 1859:

> "Most of our Asiatic wars with countries beyond the limits of our Empire have been carried on by means of the military and monetary resources of the Government of India, though the objects of those wars were, in some instances, purely British, and in others but remotely connected with the interests of India." (Major Wingate—"Our Financial Relations with India", 1859, p. 17.)

Wars were conducted on this basis in Afghanistan, Burma, Siam, China, Persia, Mesopotamia, Arabia, Egypt and Abyssinia.

The limitless calculations and aspirations of the British Military authorities, during the 19th century period of extending power, to achieve world domination on the basis of India were illustrated in the outburst of Sir Charles Napier who was Commander-in-Chief under Lord Dalhousie before the revolt of 1857:

> "Would that I were King of India I would make Moscow and Pekin shake. . . . The five rivers and the Punjab, the Indus and Sind, the Red Sea and Malta, what a chain of lands and waters to attach England to India! Were I king of England, I would from the palace of Delhi, thrust forth a clenched fist, in the teeth of Russia and France, England's fleet should be all in all in the West, and the Indian Army all in all in the East."

The size of the Indian Army and the enormous scale of expenditure upon it have been largely governed, not only by the needs of holding in subjection the people of India, but by the calculations of its use for wars and expansion beyond the frontiers of India. In 1885 Sir Courtenay Ilbert, of the Viceroy's Council, explained in a minute of dissent to the existing policy:

> "A standing Army which is larger than necessary for home requirements will be a temptation as an almost irresistible weapon of offence beyond the frontier." (Sir Courtenay Ilbert, Minute of Dissent, August 14, 1885).

This prophecy was fulfilled in the conquest and annexation of Burma which followed immediately after. Then came the Chitral Expedition of 1895, the inglorious campaign of Tirah, the annexation of the North-west Frontier regions under Curzon in 1900 and the Tibet Expedition of 1904.

In the discussions on the budget of 1904-5 Sir E. Ellis defended the policy of expansion against the criticisms of the Indian national leader, Gokhale:

> "Are we to be content to hide ourselves behind our mountain barriers under the foolish impression that we should be safe, whilst the absorption of Asiatic kingdoms is steadily in progress. . . . It is, I think, undoubted that the Indian army in future must be the main factor in the maintenance of the balance of power in Asia. It is impossible to regard it any longer as a local militia for purely local defence and maintenance of order."

Lord Curzon was even more explicit in his statement in relation to the same discussion:

> "India is like a fortress with the vast moat of the sea on two of her faces and with mountains for her walls on the remainder. But beyond these walls which are sometimes of by no means insuperable height and admit of being easily penetrated, extends a glacis of varying breadth and dimension. We do not want to occupy it, but we also cannot afford to see it occupied by our foes. We are quite content to let it remain in the hands of our allies and friends; but if rival and unfriendly influences creep up to it and lodge themselves right under our walls, we are compelled to intervene because a danger would thereby grow up that might one day menace our security. This is the secret of the whole position in Arabia, Persia, Afghanistan, Tibet and as far eastwards as Siam."

The conception of Lord Curzon, whose governing influence may be traced in the whole subsequent

policy down to the present day, can be found more fully expounded in his book "Problems of Far East."

> "The Indian Empire is in the strategic centre of the third most important portion of the globe. . . . But her central and commanding position is nowhere better seen than in the political influence which she exercises over the destinies of her neighbours near and far, and the extent to which their fortunes revolve upon an Indian axis." (Rt. Hon. G. N. Curzon, "Problems of the Far East", 1895, pp. 9-10).

This traditional attitude of British imperialist strategy in relation to India continued through the first world war, through the era between the two world wars, and through the second world war. The conflict of British and German imperialism which culminated in the first world war developed especially over the drive of German expansion to the Middle East along the Berlin-Bagdad route, the route to India. Indian resources and Indian troops were freely used by Britain in the first world war.

The strategic importance of India to Britain increased in the period between the two world wars. The new Middle-Eastern Empire and system of influence was built up on the basis of India. The concentration on the Cape route with the new naval base of Simonstown to balance the possible loss of effective control of the Mediterranean, and on the supposedly impregnable naval base of Singapore to command the gateway from the Pacific into the Indian Ocean, alike reflected the central concentration on the control of India and of the routes to India as the pivot of the empire. As the passage through the Mediterranean and the Suez Canal became increasingly precarious, the Imperial Air Line uniting Britain with Australia through Baghdad, Karachi, Calcutta and Singapore, and with the Far East through India and Siam, became increasingly important as the lifeline of the empire. As Japan extended its hold on the Pacific and on the coast and riverways of China, the land route through Burma assumed a new importance.

The vulnerability of all these preparations was revealed in the second world war. The war of 1914 had been relatively remote from India despite the use of Indian troops and resources overseas. But in 1942-44 war and invasion overran the closest neighbours of India and reached the borders of India. The war of 1914 had laid a heavy economic strain on India. But the second world war brought not only far heavier economic exactions, it brought extreme inflation, economic disorganisation and famine. The war of 1914 had stimulated and sharpened political question for India. But the second world war brought the fundamental question of Indian independence to the forefront of Indian politics.

The second world war revealed the increased weakening of British imperialism. Not the strength of British imperialism in Asia, but the combined strength of the United States the Soviet Union and Britain, and with the decisive battles fought in Europe, thus facilitating the ultimate concentration of power against Japan, led to the final reversal of the disasters and losses suffered by the British Empire in Asia. But the attempt to reestablish the old colonial system after the war met with powerful resistance in face of the enormous advance of the colonial liberation movements in Asia.

Nevertheless there is no question that India continues to occupy a position of decisive importance for British world strategy after the second world war. Between the two key areas of British imperialist domination and influence, the Middle-East and South-East Asia, India represents the pivot and, from the standpoint of British policy, the indispensable base. In its rear-guard battle against the colonial movements in Asia, British imperialism used India as its main military base, its source of supplies and even its recruiting ground for troops. The dangerous tendencies of reactionary policy in British and the United States towards an anti-Soviet alignment have their powerful repercussions for India.

But in the modern era a new factor has come upon the scene. The national awakening of the Indian people has carried with it, with increasing clearness the demand for an independent foreign policy, not on the side of imperialism but on the side of the liberation movements of the peoples. The conflict of imperialism and the Indian people finds expression also in the field of foreign policy.

This conflict has only come to the front in the most recent period. Prior to the war of 1914, the Indian national movement did not attempt to take up any active role in relation to world political questions save in respect of the special question of

Indians abroad and the disabilities under which they suffered in the other countries of the Empire.

This sense of importance in relation to the major world political issues of the epoch should not be mistaken for indifference or deliberate isolation. Within the political movement, and even in sections of the population far beyond, there was intense interest in foreign political events in so far as these might be felt to bear on the prospects of Indian liberation. Every sign of weakening of British imperialism as in the South African African war, was followed with eager hopefulness. The victory of Japan in 1905 was hailed with enthusiasm and a new sense of confidence as the first victory of an Asiatic power against the hitherto supposed invincible forces of Western imperialism. The struggle of Egypt and Ireland against British domination, of the threatened Turkish Empire against the predatory schemes of the powers, of Persia against the Anglo-Russian plans for partition, aroused passionate sympathy. The Russian Revolution of 1905, the Turkish Revolution and the Chinese Revolution awakened answering echoes. All these were indications of the first beginnings of a wider international consciousness.

The war of 1914 and the Russian Revolution of 1917 brought a new situation.

In the war of 1914, the then dominent moderate leadership of the national movement gave its full support to British imperialism in the hope of thereby earning the reward of democratic advance in India. The National Congress deputation in London at the time of outbreak of war, consisting of Lajpat Rai, Jinnah, Sinha and others hastened to proclaim co-operation for a speedy victory for the Empire. In the earlier years of the war, National Congress became the scene of ovations to the leading Government representatives who attended it.

A small group of militant nationalists represented by Hardayal, Barkatullah and others entered into relations with Germany and formed an Indian Committee in Berlin. These, however, exercised no very great influence.

Within India militant struggles were conducted by the left-wing of the national movement.

"At the close of the war the National Congress still entertained the hope that the widely current promises of self-determination might be applied to India. Tilak was deputed to represent the Congress to the Peace Conference at Versailles, and, after the refusal of his passport by the British Government had prevented his attendance, he wrote a letter to Clemenceau as President of the Peace Conference to press the claims of India. In the course of this letter he wrote:

> "It is unnecessary for me to dwell upon the imperative importance of solving the Indian question for the purpose of ensuring the future peace of the world and the progress of the people of India. India is self-contained, harbours, no design upon the integrity of other States and has no ambition outside. With her vast area, enormous resources and prodigious population, she may well aspire to be a leading Power in Asia. She could therefore be a powerful steward of the League of Nations in the East for maintaining the peace of the world and the stability of the British Empire against all aggressors and disturbers of the peace, whether in Asia or elsewhere."

The document of 1918 is the first document of the Indian national movement in the sphere of world policy and reflects the outlook then prevailing.

These hopes were destined to be dashed. "India" was made an original member of the League of Nations. The anomaly of such a "membership", when the control of India, and therefore of the representation and policy, was entirely in British hands, has been sharply expressed by Professor A. B. Keith:

> "The fundamental mistake was that of 1919, when India was given a place in the League of Nations at a time when her policy, internal and external, was wholly dominated by the British Government. The justification for League membership was autonomy; it could fairly be predicted for the Great Dominions: of India, it had no present truth, and it could hardly be said that its early fulfilment was possible. In these circumstances, it would have been wiser candidly to admit that India could not be given then a place in the League, while leaving it open for her, when autonomous, to be accorded distinct membership. . . . As it is, in the League, India's position is

> frankly anomalous; for her policy is determined, and is to remain determined indefinitely, by the British Government." (Sir A. B. Keith, "Constitutional History of India", 1937, pp. 472-3).

The "membership" of India in the League of Nations under these conditions meant only another vote in the hands of Britain.

While the older leadership of the national movement as illustrated in Tilak's letter of 1919 still looked to British imperialism as their natural leader and could publicly offer India as "a powerful steward for maintaining the stability of the British Empire", new currents were developing from the end of the first world war. The Russian Revolution of 1917, the world revolutionary wave which followed at the conclusion of the war and the advance of the colonial liberation movements in all subject countries led to a new world situation in which India was vitally concerned. Against the old reactionary camp of Western imperialism, the broad common interests of the Soviet Union, the international working-class movement and the national movement in the colonial countries now provided the basis for a new world alignment. To this new world front all the progressive currents of Indian nationalism responded.

The advance of the Chinese national revolution during 1925-27 awakened enthusiastic response in India. In 1927 the National Congress carried a resolution to protest against the dispatch of Indian troops to Shanghai for use against the Chinese revolution. In the same year the National Congress took part in the foundation of and affiliated to the International League of the Oppressed peoples against Imperialism, being represented at the Brussels Conference by Nehru. This was an important landmark in the development of the common front of the world anti-imperialist forces linking up the colonial peoples and the international working-class.

This awakening swept forward with the development of the fascist war offensive, and in face of the complicity of British imperialism in assisting fascist aggression and thus hastening the advance to a world war. The National Congress took its stand with the Abyssinian people and with Spanish Democracy and gave practical aid. It was represented at the world Peace Congress which met at Brussels in September, 1936 and affiliated to the International Peace Campaign, subject to the Indian viewpoint that no stable peace could be built up on the basis of imperialist exploitation, that no sanctity of treaties could be recognised which maintained imperialist domination, and that India required freedom to act as a free member of the League of Nations.

In 1936 at a time when the British and French Government were supporting "non-intervention" in relation to the German Italian war of aggression against Spanish Democracy, the Indian National Congress proclaimed at its session at Faizpur in December, 1936:

> "Fascist aggression has increased, the Fascist Powers forming alliances and groupings themselves together for war with the intention of dominating Europe and the world, and crushing the political and social freedom. The Congress is fully conscious of the necessity of facing this world menace in co-operation with the progressive nations and the peoples of the world."

In February, 1938, the Haripura Session declared for support of "collective security" and condemned the policy of complicity with fascist aggression which were bringing nearer the menace of war. In 1938 a boycott was proclaimed against Japanese goods. In the spring of 1939 the Tripuri session of the National Congress explicitly dissociated India from the Munich policy.

> "The Congress records its entire disapproval of the British foreign policy culminating in the Munich Pact, the Anglo-Italian Agreement and the recognition of Rebel Spain. This policy has been one of deliberate betrayal of democracy, repeated breaches of pledges, the ending of the system of collective security, and co-operation with Governments which are avowed enemies of democracy and freedom . . . the Congress dissociates itself entirely from the British foreign policy which has consistently aided Fascist powers and helped the destruction of democratic countries."

Thus the Indian people through their national leaders had declared their opposition to Fascism and their alignment with the democratic and progressive forces of the world against Fascism long before the

British declaration of war against Germany in 1939 during the critical preceding years when the British Government was giving practical and diplomatic assistance to fascist aggression.

The second world war brought new issues and alignments. It was a tragedy that the deep anti-fascist sympathies of the Indian national movement, proved by many years' record and the open declarations of readiness to participate as a free ally in the liberation of the United Nations were blocked and frustrated by the reactionary obstruction of British imperialism under Tory domination.

But the sequel to the second world war has brought the issue of the alignment between imperialism and the liberation forces of the world to new sharpness and these questions are of vital concern to India today.

The end of the war has given rise to a new world situation whose outlines are still fluid and taking shape. There is the danger of the division of the world into two hostile camps, with the immeasurable menace of a third world war. It is still possible to check this danger by the united resistance and activity of the democratic forces of the peoples against the reactionary war plans.

The outcome of the victory in the war of the alliance against fascism has given rise to a two-fold tendency—one progressive, the other reactionary.

On the one hand it has opened the way to an enormous democratic popular advance. Fascism the main spearhead of reaction in the preceding years, the leader of the offensive against democracy and the most brutal exponent of the open and unconcealed theories of racial domination had been defeated. German, Italian and Japanese imperialism had been eliminated from the ranks of the Powers. Anglo-American imperialism remains but has to share world leadership with the Socialist Soviet Union in an uneasy partnership. The Soviet Union, despite the grim losses of the war has emerged from the war enormously strengthened in its world position and influence.

The liberated European nations are pressing forward along the path of advanced democratic development against the old feudal and militarist and big business forces which had betrayed the national cause and served Hitler. Japan's grip on China has been broken and the march of the Chinese National and Democratic Revolution is resumed despite pressure of American reaction placing obstacles in the path. All over Asia the advance of the liberation movements makes itself felt and a new inspiration has been kindled by the example of the Indonesian Republic holding out against the military assault of Anglo-Dutch reaction.

On the other hand, all this popular advance has given rise to contrary tendency from the old conservative world of imperialism centred in the West in Anglo-American imperialism. Imperialism has been weakened by the outcome of the war, and has had to execute many partial strategic retreats, as in India and Burma. But imperialism does not lightly give up. Attempts are pressed forward to re-impose the old colonial system in Asia, to undermine the new popular regimes in Europe, and to build up a Western Block of Imperialist reaction against the Soviet Union. In Malaya active measures are being taken against the national liberation movement which played such a key part in driving out the Japanese. In Indonesia military operations are conducted to destroy the independent Republic. In China American imperialism intervenes with arms and troops. In Greece Britain imposes by armed force a reactionary government based on the monarchist fascist elements which had sided with Hitler. Above all, all these reactionary alignments and intrigues all over the world centre once again today, as they centred in those critical years of the era between the two years, in the supreme aim of imperialist reaction, the world alignment against the Soviet Union because the Soviet Union is correctly seen by imperialism as the main bulwark of the world forces of liberation of the peoples, who stand opposed to imperialism.

India is very vitally concerned in this new world alignment. Just as Indian national opinion correctly understood Indian interests in the alignment which preceded the war so it is equally necessary and even more necessary today. Indian interests do not coincide with the reactionary strategy of Anglo-American imperialism even when that reactionary strategy is taken over from Tory hands by a Labour Government. The Indian national movement rightly protested against the use of Indian troops against the people in the tasks of colonial suppression in Burma, in Malaya and Indonesia. This conflict is only a part

of the greater world conflict in which India is vitally concerned.

New horizons and new possibilities for India in world politics have opened out in the most recent period with the measure of victory of the Indian national movement and the establishment of Governments based on Indian national leaders. This change already became visible with the establishment of the Provincial National Government under the leadership of Nehru, even though still within the old forms of the Viceroy's Council, in August, 1946, and has been carried further with the establishment of Dominion Status in August, 1947.

From August, 1946, onwards a great change has taken place in the character of Indian representation in the councils of the nations in place of the previous puppet misrepresentation of India by British nominees. In the United Nations India has been able to play foremost progressive role in association with the Soviet Union and other democratic nations against the block of reaction led by the United States and Britain.

This was shown in the fight against the racial reaction and annexationist policies of South Africa conducted in the General Assembly of the United Nations in the end of 1946. The Indian delegation, led by Mrs. Pandit, maintained a tireless fight which won universal admiration. This fight was actively supported by the representatives of the Soviet Union, Egypt, Poland, Mexico and other countries. In the end the South African proposal of General Smuts, although supported by Britain and the United States and their satellites was defeated by 31 votes to 21; and the Franco-Mexican resolution, which recognised the essential justice of India's claim, was carried by 32 votes to 15, *i.e.*, with the two thirds majority needed to invest it with the authority of the General Assembly of the United Nations. This was a significant victory of the democratic forces in the United Nations.

Similarly in the fight on behalf of the Indonesian Republic against Dutch aggression before the Security Council of the United Nations India was able to play its part in raising the issue, as well as in declaring its solidarity with the Indonesian Republic.

Another notable development was the Pan-Asian Conference convened under Indian auspices at Delhi in March, 1947, and attended by representatives from nearly all the Asiatic countries, including the Indonesian Republic, Viet-Nam and the Soviet Asiatic Republics. The progressive and democratic character of this conference, expressing the new rising forces of the peoples of Asia, was a striking contrast to the old type of reactionary "Pan-Asian" dreams associated with Japanese imperialism.

Indian independent control of foreign policy has also made possible independent Indian representation in the capitals of the world, not only in London and Washington, but equally in Moscow, thus opening the way to new and closer contacts with all the countries of the outside world.

At the same time is necessary to recognise that the manoeuvres of the old reactionary forces of British and American imperialism are still active in relation to India and seek to draw India into the network of the strategic plans associated with the Anglo-American bloc. The high commanding positions of the armed forces in both the Dominions still remain in British hands. American diplomacy and designs of commercial expansion actively seek to press forward penetration in India.

New problems are arising for India as for all countries in the present alignment of world politics. India's interests lie in international democratic co-operation on the basis of the freedom of nations, in friendship with all nations in the cause of peace, and in opposition to all attempts to divide the world into opposing blocks. In pursuit of these aims India's natural associations will be closest with all the rising democratic progressive and anti-imperialist forces of the world, just as these will stand without compromise for the fullest completion and maintenance of the unfettered freedom and independence of India. There is every ground for confidence that along these lines of a democratic foreign policy India will be able to play a great and fruitful part in the coming eventful era of world history.

INFLUENCE OF OTHER COUNTRIES ON INDIAN STRUGGLE

The freedom struggle in India has all through been greatly influenced by the trend of thought and events in the world. Stirring world events have taken place before the birth of the Congress. The French Revolution has been a perennial fountain head of inspiration to all down trodden people and it and the ideas on which it took birth, naturally influenced India at a later time. The newly 'educated' class in India were deeply excited by Mill and other liberal English political writers. To the more daring, extremist school, Mazzini, Cavour and Garibaldi were a great source of inspiration. As we have seen the birth of a nationalist movement in 1905 was not a little influenced by the defeat of Tsarist Russia by a small Asian power—Japan, and the rise of oriental Japan to a modern progressive and strong power touched the imagination of Indians and other Asians deeply. The awakening in the China of Sun Yat Sen had a similar effect. All East was astir. A revolution took place in Iran in 1906, in the Ottoman Empire of the Turks in 1908, in China in 1907 and on a large scale in 1912. The Indian movement was only a part of this floodtide.

The World War I, a war that involved all the world and released tremendous new forces, had naturally a profound influence in India. The sacrifices of Indian soldiers on the various war fronts were not in vain, and gave India a new consciousness. The Irish movement of De Valera carried against the common enemy of Irish and Indian Freedom, directly helped in the formation of Indian revolutionary activity. Later a colossal world event had taken place. The rather fantastic theory and dream of Marxism had come to be realised in Russia. The change over from the greatest monarchical Imperialism to the rule of Labourers deeply stirred the imagination of the people the world over, and in India. It influenced the whole trend and temper of our movement in the Congress and outside and is not to be measured by the success and failure of the orthodox Communist party in India. The Socialistic idea also gave an economic shape to the objectives of our struggle. It is true that the Congress under Gandhiji's leadership had a rather unique character, both in the methods and ideology. But at Karachi the Congress had to lay down a charter of rights of the people and specially the Kisans and Labourers. All through the Thirties, Socialist thought made rapid headway in separate special organisation, in the youth movement and in the Congress itself.

Also the war had resulted in the resurrection of Turkey under Ataturk Kamal. The personality and programme of Kamal stirred the imagination of nationalist India deeply, though perhaps not widely enough. Perhaps, like Afghanistan of Amanullah, India was in the majority not yet prepared enough to accept the lesson of Turkey. Perhaps the influence of Gandhiji also tended towards retaining the mediaeval outlook and revivalism which Ataturk successfully uprooted in Turkey. The independence of Afghanistan and the personality of King Amanullah touched the heart of Indian youth deeply, though for a short while.

The influence of America, the fact of a British Colony snatching independence and building up from the scratch, a mighty new nation out of various nationalities and races, of the democracy in American constitution and the equality of opportunity and freedom for the common man, of the great progress in Science and living standards in America, has been an abiding factor in all endeavour in India. Somehow Indians have all along looked to America for support in their struggle, and credited America with more idealism than is perhaps warranted. For them the Statue of Liberty has been more real than the Negro problem. They have believed more in the stirring words of great American Statesmen, Washington, Lincoln, Wilson, Roosevelt and Wilkie than perhaps the Americans themselves.

There have been great thinkers and writers who though born and living in a particular country are citizens of the world. India has received valuable help, sympathy and friendship from many such, coming from England herself, America and other countries. This kinship at the highest level between our own world citizens, Tagore, Gandhi, Nehru, on one hand and people like Wells, Shaw, Russel and the earlier English friends of our country, of Romain Rolland, Pearl Buck, Lin Yutang, Enstien, Louis Fischer, De Valera, Madam and Marshall Chiangkai-shek—to mention only a few names has kept our nationalism at a high level. There have been other friends of India, who though coming from abroad, mostly from England herself made India their home. Annie Besant and Andrews are the most notable instances, though there are several others, some known to fame others unknown but with a valuable



Sunyat Sen

Maker of modern China. The Chinese Revolution deeply inspired India's Struggle for Freedom



Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek, President of Chinese Republic, sends India a message of greetings on her achievement of freedom

Great men of thought shape the world but greater men of thought and action have built the dreams in steel and concrete.



Garibaldi
The inspiring Leader of Italy, who carved out Mazinni's dream with a sword. His life and work echoed across the seas for all soldiers of Liberty.



Lenin
Great Revolutionary, Statesman and maker of Marx's dream in U.S.S.R., inspiring a new social order for the whole world.



Darwin
His revolutionary ideas in 'origin of Species' ushered a Renaissance in outlook and progress, in the 19th century.



Marx
Social Philosopher, whose gigantic intellect and dream founded a world revolution. His 'Capital' is the Bible of the most vigorous, but often, mutually disagreeing schools.

though silent contribution to our national regeneration, and to the great dream of a family of world nations.

The evil influence of world personalities and reactionary movements have not left India unaffected. Who can deny the incentive to our endeavours provided by the class of Britons that is represented by Mr. Churchill. There have been enough of these in Indian districts and centres, in the India Office and the houses of English Parliament.

Placed as India was, it has been repelled by any movement based on racial discrimination, agression and imperialism. But it seems the fascist movement left a deep impress on a section of our people, the followers of the Muslim League and lent it a policy and programme, which with the help of British Imperialism resulted in division and disruption in India. The ghost of Hitler seems still to brood over India at the dawn of its new life.

India's Foreign Policy

"Like a person who is sick, a nation seeking freedom can think of little besides its own struggle and its own misery. India has been no exception to this rule, and often, in the intensity of her struggle, she has forgotten the world and thought only in terms of herself. But as strength came to her and confidence born of success, she began to look beyond her frontiers. . . . Perhaps nothing is so surprising in India today as this anxious interest in foreign affairs and the realization that her own struggle for freedom is a part of the world struggle." (Nehru: Asia, May, 1939.)

A national foreign policy in India was of course not possible under British domination. But as our national movement gained strength, an Indian foreign policy emerged and became clearer and clearer. This in the beginning was formulated in expression of sympathy and disapproval of this or that 'cause' or international situation or country. The conflict of ideologies between the two world wars gave India a clearly determined foreign policy. This determination is, perhaps, the greatest contribution of Nehru to our national movement.

It is not only the one world outlook of Nehru, Gandhi or Tagore that has given shape to our outlook. India has an inherent tradition of internationalism and universalism. Tagore's attempt to revive this spirit when we were fighting a life and death struggle against foreign aggression made us—the younger section, very impatient with Tagore. But as we began to realise the world set-up, it became clear that our nationalism was a part of the one world and international justice and friendship movement. It began to be realised how "British" India was the biggest factor of world imperialism and conflict.

The first important reference to India's place in the world structure is to be found in the letters of Lokamanya Tilak addressed to clemenceau, the President of the Versailles Peace Conference.

Earlier some "revolutionary" Indians had been making rather ineffective efforts to win international support for Indian Freedom.

In 1927, Nehru participated in the League against Imperialism at Brussels. This resulted in revival of contacts between two of the most important Asian countries, India and China. Even a declaration for joint Indo-Chinese policy and co-operation was made.

The Madras Congress passed a resolution condemning British introduction and use of Indian troops in China. This Congress also declared its unequivocal opposition to another imperialist war.

Indias attitude to war was reiterated in almost all subsequent sessions of the Congress, till a crisis was later reached at Ramgarh.

During the period when the fascist powers in Europe were growing in ascendency and the so-called Democracies in the West were encouraging their aggressions, it became remarkable how the Congress, under the leadership of Nehru made up its mind clearly against Fascism as a counter-part of Imperialism. At Lucknow Congress in 1936 the Presidential address dwelt on this—what then seemed to be a rather remote problem.

This was the time when the British Statesman, Sir John Simon, Amery, Churchill were applauding and inciting Japanese aggression in China, and the achievements of it Duce in Italy as well as in Abyssinia and of Hitler in Germany, in Spain and later in Czeko-Slovakia.

At Haripura Session the Congress passed and made a clear statement of the Indian policy with regard to Fascism, and the aggression by, and support of, the fascist powers.

As a subject country India could do little more than give symbolic expression of her alignment. Congress gave its moral support to Abyssinia. Congress sent a foodstuffs to Republican Spain and a medical mission to China.

On the out-break of the second world war, the Congress had to struggle long and hard between its desire to play an honourable part alongside what it thought to be the more progressive forces and its desire to ensure Indian Freedom from the tenacious British strangle-hold. This story is told in another chapter. The August 9, Resolution reiterated India's foreign policy once again in an unequivocal manner.

Negatively this policy has been and is of opposition to war, Imperialism and Fascism.

Positively this policy has come to be of unity with her neighbours, all of whom share more or less similar circumstances and face similar problems. This idea led to the Inter Asian Conference held at Delhi this year.

The idea of a pan asiatic federation has been in the mind of some of the Indian politicians since the first resurgence of Japan. Later the revolutions and formation of popular regimes in the Asiatic states of the U. S. S. R., in the new Iran and in China made India look to them. Chittaranjan Das at Gaya first gave expression to the idea. Srinivas Iyengar at Gauhati developed the theme. In 1928, the Congress passed a resolution, at the instance of Sri Satyamurti to hold a pan-Asiatic Federation in 1930 in India. But this scheme never materialised, till in 1947. The second world war had to intervene to make the conditions ripe both in India and in the various Asian countries.

NEHRU'S STATEMENTS ON INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

The following points were made by Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru, India's Prime Minister and Minister for External Affairs in the declaration of India's foreign policy in the Indian Parliament on December 4, 1947.

Aim to keep out of the World Blocs and Wars

"We propose to look after India's interests in the context of world co-operation and world peace in so far as world peace can be preserved. We propose to keep in the closest terms of friendship with other countries unless they themselves create difficulties."

Co-operation with Britain, America and Soviet Union

"We shall be friends with Britain and we intend co-operation with America. We intend co-operation fully with the Soviet Union."

Independent Policy

"India has sought to avoid foreign entanglements and joining any bloc."

Regarding Palestine

"India stands for a Federal State with autonomous parts, naturally with an Arab majority in the Federal State, but autonomy for the Jewish regions."

Regarding Indians in Commonwealth

"We are obviously intent on protecting the interests of Indians abroad, on the other hand we cannot protect any vested interests which injure the cause of the country they are in."

War time alliance was to be according to the country's interest.

CHAPTER XLIV

SOME HISTORICAL PARALLELS

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THE extracts given in the following pages from the history of various countries that had to face the issue of union versus separation or where the national entity was threatened by a tendency for disruption have been compiled by the author who is a well-known historian.

These and other pages of History have a remarkable resemblance to the existing conditions in India and have a direct bearing on our most vital problem today, the problem of stabilising the Swaraj, and consolidating the Indian Union.

It would be rash for any body to assert today that the question of Pakistan is a settled fact. Innumerable Muslims in India will not agree with this opinion. The wisdom and 'laws' of History would prevail sooner or later.

There is hardly any other 'lesson' of History so clear as the lesson given in these pages. Separation, dismemberment or 'Balkanisation' in any country has been co-extent with its backwardness, weakness and dark ages. It has been the extreme penalty for a vanquished country after a war. Union and consolidation in a unitary or federal state has been the goal and highest achievement of a country's statesmanship.

The Balkans has been the classical negative example. Germany provides both pictures, in its backward states welded by Bismarck into a powerful new State and in its present day evil times, when even its bitter foes hesitate to penalise Germany to the extent of its dismemberment.

It is strange that such a penalty of defeat comes to India as a part of victory and freedom.

But there are innumerable other stories, in fact it is the common story of the rise of all great nations, how the natural differences of smaller groups and people in primitive, mediaeval and newly awake countries were overcome and forgotten in the march to progress.

History repeats its lessons patiently and in a ruthless fashion and realisation often comes to us after paying a heavy price. Such 'Parallels' would help in this belated realisation. But also they are a warning of many dangers that lie ahead. For the creation of a separate State in India has not solved the question of minorities, and if the logic of Pakistan was true, two nations still remain 'warring in the bosom of a single State' in the Indian Union. Also, even though the legacy of the British in another respect, the problem of various Indian States seems to be solved or near solution, the danger of personal ambition of rulers or groups cannot be ignored. There are other fissiparous tendencies in communities and the provincial divisions that have to be dissolved to build up the Indian Union and History would guide us in this task whether in the day to day goal and policy or the need to meet a crisis.

The Parallels are given under the following headings:

1. Union Versus Separation in the U.S.A.
2. The Voice of Lincoln.
3. Story of Canada.
4. The Example of Switzerland.
5. Lesson from Sudetan Germans.
6. Ireland, Arab and India. (Sondhi)

1. UNION VERSUS SEPARATION IN THE U. S. A.

If the War of Independence had not been fought by America and she had to struggle like India as a British Colony, what would the American picture be like? The British would have sent a number of Commissions, Missions, Delegations to examine the fitness of America for self rule and in due time a consummation of their mission would have arrived in a Plan where justice was done to all States, communities and interests.

What would be the "Report" of a Simon Commission on America's fitness? The following extract, from Page Arnot, writing in the "Labour Monthly" in 1930, when the Simon Commission had been sent to India would show a picture not very dissimilar to India.

"IMPARTIAL," SURVEY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA BY A BRITISH COMMISSION!

(By R. Page Arnot)

"The sub-continent of the United States is characterised by the greatest diversity of climate and geographical features, while its inhabitants exhibit a similar diversity of race and religion. The customary talk of the United States as a single entity tends to obscure, to the casual British observer, the variegated assemblage of races and creeds which make up the whole. In the City of New York alone there are to be found nearly a hundred different nationalities, some of which are in such great numbers that New York is at once the largest Italian city, the largest Jewish city and the largest Negro city in the world. The contiguity of such diverse elements has been a fruitful cause of the most bitter communal conflicts. In the Southern States especially, this has led to inter-racial riots and murders which are only prevented from recurring by the presence of an external impartial power able to enforce law and order. The notoriety of the rival gangs of Chicago gunmen and of the Chinese hongs in New York have diverted attention from the not less pressing problems presented to the Paramount Power by the separate existence of the Mormons in Utah, the Finns in Minnesota, the Mexican immigration up the Mississippi and the Japanese on the West Coast; not to speak of the survival in considerable numbers of the aboriginal inhabitants."

It is a fact that when the British had to quit America, conditions there were not very different from what they are in India. People from various countries did constitute the Americans, and also the tendency among its various States was naturally to assert a right for 'Autonomy' or 'self determination'. This, later, came to head in a forceful assertion by the Southern States of their right to secede from the Union.

The danger, inherent in newly won freedom was seen by the American Statesman from the start.

"Throughout the years of the making of the Confederation Washington had developed constantly on the theme that if powers of the Congress are not enlarged, anarchy and confusion must ensue."

The danger of the break up of the American Union was recognised and faced firmly by America's great leaders. Alexander Hamilton, the Vice-President of the Confederated States of America had declared: "There is something diminutive and contempetable in the prospect of a number of petty states with the appearance only of union, jarring, jealous and perverse, without any determined direction, fluctuating and unhappy at home, weak and in-

significant by their dissentions in the eyes of other nations."

Hamilton's book—'The Federalist' is full of wisdom from which India can benefit much today and the extracts given below from Hamilton and other writers would be found interesting and relevent to Indian situation. (Sondhi)

(From 'The Federalist' by Hamilton, Vice-President of the Confederate States of America.)

Whenever the dissolution of the union of America arrives, America will have risen to exclaim the words of the poet "Farewell, a long farewell to all my greatness," (p. 59).

If the outside power see that our national government is efficient and well administered—our trade prudently regulated—our militia properly organized and disciplined—our resources and finances discreetly managed—our credit re-established—our people free, contented and united, they will be much more disposed to cultivate our friendship than to provoke our resentment. (p. 69).

If on the other hand they find us either destitute of an effectual government (each state showing right or wrong as to its rulers may seem convenient) or split into three or four independent and probably discordant republics or confederacies, one inclining to Britain, another to France and a third to Spain and perhaps played off against each other by the three, what a poor pitiful figure will America make in their eyes. How soon then would dear bought experience proclaim that when a people or family so divide, it never fails to be against themselves. (p. 70).

Should the people of America divide themselves into three or four nations the jealousies would arise. Instead of their being joined in affection and free from the apprehensions of different interest, envy and jealousy would soon extinguish confidence and affection and the partial interest of each confederacy instead of the general interest of all America would be the only objects of their policy and pursuits. Hence like most other bordering nations they would be either involved in disputes and war or live in constant apprehension of them. (p. 72).

Taking the example of Great Britain, we may profit by their experience without paying the price which it cost them. Although it seemed obvious to commonsense that the people of such an island should be but one nation, yet we find that they were for ages divided into three and that those three were almost constantly embroiled in quarrels and wars with one another. Their mutual jealousies were kept inflamed perpetually. (p. 72).

Queen Anne in her letter of July 1, 1706 to the Scotch Parliament had declared "An entire and perfect union will be the solid foundation of lasting peace. It will secure your religion, liberty and prosperity, remove the animosities amongst yourselves and the jealousies and differences between our two kingdoms. It must increase your strength, riches and trade and by this union the whole island being joined in affection and free from all apprehension of different interest, will be enabled to resist all its enemies."

Those who consider the history of similar divisions and confederacies, will find abundant reasons to apprehend that those in contemplation would in no other sense be neighbours than as they would be borderers, that they would neither love nor trust one another but on the contrary would be a prey of discord, jealousy and mutual injuries in short that they would place us exactly in the situation in which some nations doubtless wish to see us—in which we should be formidable only to each other. (p. 74).

From these confederations it appears that those persons are greatly mistaken who suppose that alliances offensive or defensive might be formed between these confederacies which would produce that combination and union of wills, and of arms and of resources which would be necessary to put and keep them in a formidable state of defence against foreign enemies.

Why did the independent states into which Britain and Spain were formerly divided combine in such alliances or unite their forces against a foreign enemy? The proposed confederacies will be distinct nations, different commercial concerns in north and in south must create different interests and of course different degrees of political attachments to and connections with different foreign nations. Hence it might and probably would happen that the foreign nation with whom the southern confederacy be at war would be the one with whom the northern confederacy would be the most desirous of preserving peace and friendship. . . .

Let candid men judge whether the division of America into any given number of independent sovereignties would tend to secure us against the hostilities and improper interference of foreign nations.

A great writer says "neighbouring nations are natural enemies of each other unless their common weakness forces them to league in a confederate republic and their constitution prevents the differences that neighbourhood occasions, extinguishing that secret jealousy which disposes all states to aggravandise themselves at the expense of their neighbours."

A firm union will be of the utmost moment in the peace and liberty of the states as barrier against domestic faction and insurrections (p. 77).

The division means splitting ourselves into an infinity of little, jealous, clashing, tumultuous, commenwealths and the wretched nurseries of unceasing discord and the miserable objects of universal pity and contempt. (p. 99).

The union serves as a bulwark against foreign danger, as the conservator of peace among ourselves, as the guardian of our commerce and other common interest as the only substitute for those military establishments which subverted the liberties of the old world and as the proper antidote for the diseases of faction which have proved fatal to other governments and of which alarming symptoms have been betrayed by our own. (Madtson and Hamilton, p. 131).

The separation had other consequences which merits attention. It produced opposite alliances with foreign powers if Bern as the head of the protestant association with the united provinces and of Luzerne, at the head of the Catholic association with France. (Madtson and Hamilton, p. 171)

The people of Holland seem to be now suffering (due to division) from popular convulsions, from dissensions among the states and from the actual invasion of foreign arms as the crisis of their destiny. (Ibid, p. 176).

The country and this people seem to have been made for each other and it appears as if it was the design of providence that an inheritance so proper and convenient for a band of brethren, united to each other by the strongest ties, should never be split into a number of unsocial, jealous, and alien sovereignties. (p. 66).

II. THE VOICE OF LINCOLN

After the war of Independence the United States under the impetus of Western enterprise was rounding out the continental domain. At this time its very existence as a nation was threatened by conflict between two sections. This storm had been long gathering on the horizon. From colonial times there had been a marked difference between the South and the North. The former by climate and soil was suited to a planting system. The North, on the other hand, added trade and manufacture to agriculture. The difference between the two was intensified with the advent of the Steam Engine and the Factory and in time the industrial North and the planting South worked out different ideas about Politics. With the passing years the conflict between the two sections grew with intensity. It flamed up in 1820, in 1830 and again in 1850. Partially it was delayed by compromise and concessions made from time to time.

In 1860 with the election of Lincoln as the President of the United States the Southern States decided to withdraw from the American union. "Bells were rung exultantly, the roar of cannons carried the word to outlying centres, fireworks lighted up the heavens and champagne flowed. The crisis so long expected had come at last."

According to the Southern Statesmen the Treaty of Peace with Great Britain "had left all the thirteen original states free, sovereign and independent states". The Constitution merely formed alliance of the thirteen separate countries and secession was to them a right and lawful. A Confederation of the seceding states was then framed.

Lincoln believed himself bound to defend the Union. War was declared. There was considerable opposition to this step, even in the north. There were widespread riots in New York against conscription used for this purpose.

The Civil War lasted for four years. The Union was declared to be perpetual, the right of the states

to secede having been forever settled. The result of the Civil War was, foremost, that it settled for all time the question whether states would lawfully withdraw from the Union. The sovereignty of the states was laid to rest. Men might still speak of the rights of the states, but these rights were not to include nullification and secession any more. The nation was supreme in fact and in theory. The power and prestige of the National Government was increased beyond all expectations and the country started on its march to industrialisation, progress and prosperity which we see this day. (Sondhi)

From Abraham Lincoln by Carl Sandburg Harcourt, (Brace and Company, New York P.U.L. B.L. 61584.)

The southern combination had forced the issue immediate dissolution and blood. (p. 213).

The union, with Lincoln, in sentiment rose to the sublimity of a religious mysticism. For Lincoln the union held a harassing dilemma of interest to the whole family of man. (p. 213).

"I would save the union. I would save it the shortest way under the constitution. My paramount object in this struggle is to save the union and is not either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the union without freeing any slave I would do it; what I do about slavery and the coloured race, I do because I believe it helps to save the union and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the union." Lincoln wrote to Horace Greeley, Vol. I, Pt. II, p. 567.

"I wish you to remember now and for ever that it is your business and not mine that if the union of the states and the liberties of this people shall be lost, it is but little to anyone of 52 years of age but a great deal to the 30 millions of people who inhabit the U.S. and to their posterity in all coming times.

It is your business to rise up and preserve the union and liberty for yourselves and not for me not with president not with office seekers but with you is the question; shall the union and shall the liberties of this country be preserved to the latest generations." Vol. I, p. 39.

To the governor Andrew Gregg Curtin of Pennsylvania Lincoln wrote: "Preserve the union at all hazards." Ibid, p. 53.

"The union shall never be abandoned unless the possibility of its existence shall cease to exist without the necessity of throwing passengers and cargo over board. So long then, as it is possible that the prosperity and the liberty of this people can be preserved within this union, it shall be my purpose at all times to preserve it."

Governor Samuel J. Kirkwood of Lowa said that the union would be maintained if it took" the last man and the last dollar."

The campaign was according to Lincoln "the union, the constitution, and the enforcement of the laws." (p. 117).

"I hold that in contemplation of universal law and of the constitution the union of these states is perpetual." (p. 128).

"Plainly the central idea of secession is the essence of anarchy. A Majority held in restraint by constitutional checks and limitations and always changing easily with deliberate changes of popular opinions and sentiments is the only true sovereign of a free people. Whoever rejects it does of necessity fly to anarchy and despotism. Unanimity is impossible, the rule of minority as a permanent arrangement is wholly unadmissible, so that rejecting the majority principle anarchy or despotism in some form is all that is left."

Lincoln in an adress in Springfield on March 4, 1861 said "Plainly speaking we cannot separate. . . . A husband and wife may be divorced or go out of the presence and beyond the reach of each other but the different parts of our country cannot do this."

"I close. We are not, we must not be, aliens or enemies but fellow countrymen and brethren. Although passion has strained our bonds of affection too hardly they must not, I am sure, they will not be broken. The mystic chords, pass through all the hearts from so many battle-fields and so many patriot-graves pass through all the hearts, and all the hearts in this broad continent of ours will yet again harmonise in their ancient music when breathed upon by the guardian angel of the nation." (p. 213).

"On the side of the union it is a struggle for maintaining in the world that form and substance of Government whose leading object is to alleviate the condition of men to afford all an unfattered start and a free chance in the race of life." (p. 291).

"We say we are for the union. The world will not forget that we say this. We know to save the union the way is plain peaceful, generous, just a way which if followed the world will forever applaud and the God must for ever bless." (p. 622).

Lincoln pointed out to that portion of the earth's surface owned and inhabited by the people of the U. S. as adapted to be the home of one national family and not for two or more. With the arrival of steam, telegraphs and intelligence, the modern inventions there was still more advantage in having one united people. Laws change, people die, the land remains." Vol. I, p. 168.

III. THE STORY OF CANADA

The story of the long conflict in Canada, between 'two nations' warring in the bossom of a single State, with differences of race, religion, language customs and prejudices and the attempts made from time to time at reconciling them, both by separation and union, till ultimately their coming together and living under modern conditions dissolved all old animosities and transformed Canada into a prosperous and progressive and homogeneous country is given in the extracts quoted below.

(From *'Canada and the Canadian Question'* by Goldwin Smith)

"I expected to find a contest between a government and a people. I found two nations warring in the bosom of a single State. I found a struggle not of principles but of races." Lord Durhams diagnosis of Canada's trouble was, that while the struggle in upper Canada was political, the controversies in lower Canada for thirty years past had borne the impress of antagonism between the French and British races, growing in intensity as the years went by. The causes of estrangement were too deep and the antipathy was too strong. The British minority would never bear to be ruled by a French majority. Rather than this, they would join the U.S. and 'that they might remain English, cease to be British'. "An English man migrating to upper Canada found himself almost as much an alien in the country as he would have been in the U.S." (vide pp. 108-110 and p. 127.)

(From *Lord Durham's Report* by Lucas)

Lord Durham also later on greatly stressed the evils produced by the difference of language. "The difference of language from the first kept them (Canadians and English) asunder. It aggravates the national animosities by representing all the events of the day in utterly different lights." Lord Dalhousie wrote that the use of two languages nourished prejudice and separation of feelings between the two classes of people. (Vol. I, p. 133.)

"Between the French and the English colonization in North America and between French and English colonists there was a great gulf fixed. Race religion, language, customs, prejudices divided them." (Ibid, p. 24.)

The French Canadians were of an intensely conservative gentry and an wholly uneducated peasentry both dominated by a church, the essence of which was absolutism. (p. 34). While the British population of Canada was a strong and substantial member of tried and approved citizens whose political training had been wholly different from that of the French Canadian.

Upto 1867 the history of Canada was chiefly that of a bitter racial struggle, the story in Lord Durham's well known words of two peoples warring in the bossom of a single state. (From *The Federation of Canada* by George M. Wrong, p. 30).

"Canada will always be French," Carleton had hoped but the emigration of 6,00,000 English exiles into Canada after the American revolution created new problems. (Ibid, p. 5.)

Lord Durham coming immediately after what was called a rebellion but was really rather a war between two races in lower Canada describes not only the estrangement of the races but the mutual bitterness as extreme. There is hardly an intermarriage, marriage of Roman Catholics with Protestants are interdicted by the Church of Rome. There is hardly any intercourse either of young or

old. Lord Durham said "of fusion there was no hope, opposed to each other in religion, in language, in character, in ideas, in national sentiments hardly ever inter-marrying, their children never taking part in the same sports, meeting in the jury-box only to obstruct justice, the two races were two nations warring in the bosom of a single state." (From Lord Durham's Report, Vol. I, p. 122 and Smith's op. cit., p. 20).

(From *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. IV, ed. 14th.)

At the census of 1921 it was found that 83·31 per cent of the population were of British or French origin. The French population estimated at 80,000 in 1763 had increased in 1921 to 2452,751 and now constitutes 27·91 per cent of the population. 55·40 per cent of the population are of British origin. (p. 695).

(From *The Federation of Canada* by G. M. Wrong)

In 1791 the Constitutional Act was passed by the British Parliament separating Canada at the Ottawa river into two parts, each with its own government, Lower Canada chiefly French retaining the old system of laws and Upper Canada purely on British model. (p. 706). William Pitt's words when introducing the bill into the house of Commons were as follows: The division it was hoped would put an end to the competition between the old French inhabitants and the new settlers from Britain or British Colonies which had occasioned the disputes of uncertainty respecting law and other disputes of less importance by the province had been so long distracted. (Lord Durham's Report, Vol. I, p. 32.)

But the struggle continued.

It soon became serious again. Louis Joseph Papineau the fiery, redoubtable leader of the French Canadian peasants foiled of complete political power (which he had sought for the elective chamber of Lower Canada) grew more angry and remonstrant and Lower Canada was soon torn by a bitter racial war. 'Our language, our institutions and our laws' was the cry then of the French. He denounced the 'reign of terror' of the English. The British in Canada were described as "subjects of foreign origin, who had no right in the country". Papineau called men who stood across his path 'foul', 'savage' and 'brutal'. He accused one governor Lord Dalhousie of being 'little short of a thief'. The rebellion was the result. In 1837 and 1838, the French Canadians took up arms. In the fighting there were bloody scenes. Montreal on the border land between the two peoples and itself half English and half French was in an especial degree the scene of racial bitterness. After the rising of 1837 and 1838 its jails were crowded with political prisoners. Exile or execution was the fate of a good many of the rebel leaders while the great mass of the French Canadians remained crushed and helpless but sullen and alert. Parliament was sitting at Montreal in 1849 when new violence broke out. The compensation for the losses of the property described during the troubles of 1837 was demanded by some of the French like the English in Upper Canada. There were bitter debates. In the university of Toronto, its later Chancellor William Hume Black, a member of the government of the time received no less than three challenges to fight duels as a result of his part in the debates. Both Mr. Black and Mr. (afterwards Sir) John A. Macdonald were arrested and apologised at the bar of the house to keep the peace. Montreal gazette cried "Rouse yourself, meet resolve and hurl your defiance against the French masters of your country", and it went on to urge the need to arm for civil war. The mob at Toronto went wholly out of control, and set fire to and destroyed the Parliament building at Montreal and wrecked private houses.

As Mr. Mack in a passionate speech at a public banquet in Montreal said "Toronto hurls defiance at the rebel-paying traitors, Kingston speaks in words of no doubtful omen, Cornwall is ready for the march we are English yet, English in body and soul." And for 18 years Canada experienced to the full the bitterness and with it the futility of racial strife. In parliament the two divisions of the upper and lower Canada having the same number of men would check-mate and baffle the plans of the others. No party could hold power unless it had a separate majority in each province. Sometimes the house would be kept in session so that a member arriving by a delayed train might be able to save the ministry from defeat. If one more bridge was built in Upper Canada than happened to be built in the same year in Lower Canada, the public mind were more hostile than by any great question of national destiny. By this time Canada had passed through the three stages in the evolution of the race problem, in the first French influence was on the whole dominant, in the second the races were isolated in separate provinces,

in the third an attempt at union had led to the paralysis of representative institutions." The true and we may hope the final solution was to be found neither in isolation nor in complete union but rather in both union and separation, union in the great affairs which touched trade, tariffs, public-services like the Post-offices and administration of justice. Separation in respect to those things in which the two races had differing ideals such as religion and education.

The most influential political leader in Lower Canada George Etienne Carteer was prepared for the union but only on condition that nothing should be done to limit the rights which the French Canadian race and the Roman Catholic Church already possessed by an Imperial Statute.

All was to be one, the separate laws and institutions, the separate language everything except the religion which marked the French Canadian nationality and which led Papineau and his followers to dream and talk of a Canadian nation was to be gradually but completely submerged. Lord Durham recommended reunion for in "existing circumstances he considered union to be a necessary preliminary to the grant of responsible government." Secondly because he considered reunion would result in a greater and stronger hold with more possibilities for the future and that in the interest of inhabitants of both provinces. The form of reunion which he recommended was a complete amalgamation of people, races, languages and laws, he recommended as far as it was humbly possible absolute unity'.

After the union it seemed as if a great spirit had entered into colonies, torpid and faction ridden and had breathed into them the breath of a new life. Echoes of the struggle are still heard but it was really ended by Federation. Unity in the state in Canada led to the Union among the churches. In time the various Presbyterians organisations united to form one church, so also did the various divisions of Methodism.

In 1867 Canada was a poor country with no very large cities and no display of wealth. Its art was primitive. Now the opening up of the west, the building of great railways, the growth of manufacture have all united to create a wealthy class in the Canadian cities. In the main the culture of Canada was an imported culture. The judges who sat in the court had for the most part learned their law in the old world. Political leaders like Brown and Macdonald had not been born in Canada. The professors in the Universities were from Europe. Since 1867 we have the transition from an imported to a native culture. The framers of the Canadian Federation prided themselves in turning to the traditions of the past.

IV. THE EXAMPLE OF SWITZERLAND

The history and government of Switzerland, a country with a population composed of three distinct races, with separate religions, languages and cultures is an object-lesson for countries similarly situated.

SWITZERLAND

(From Governments of Continental Europe by Groch and Zoucher)

Republic of Switzerland known by the formal title of the Swiss confederation is a federal state of 25 semi-sovereign cantons and half cantons, with a population numbering about four millions (p. 979).

One of the most unique and challenging features of the Swiss nationhood is its violation of the nationalistic canons of demographic and cultural unity. The population of Switzerland includes three different language groups, German, French and Italian. Approximately three million Swiss use the first of these languages, somewhat over 800,000 use the second and about 250,000 use the third. In addition somewhat 50,000 use a dialect known as Romansch which has some literary significance. The linguistic groups, moreover, are geographically quite sharply separated from each other by the cantonal boundaries. Thus the Ticino is almost exclusively an Italian speaking canton, Geneva, Vaud, Neuchatal, and Valais are almost exclusively French and all the remaining cantons except Bern and Fri-bourg are almost exclusively German.

In Bern the German population predominates over the French in the ratio of 5 to 1 and in Fri-bourg the French population predominates over the German in the ratio of 2 to 1. Moreover all the languages including even the Romansch are regarded as official for matters relating to the Federal government and administration and there are few educated Swiss who

cannot use two or even three of these languages. Notwithstanding these facts, Switzerland remains a nation with three major and geographically quite sharply distinguished linguistic communities who probably have as many cultural affiliations with their respective linguistic brethren in the contiguous great nations, states of Germany, France and Italy as they have with each other (p. 981-82).

Religious Differences

Another centrifugal factor affecting Switzerland's nationhood is the confessional cleavages. Through Switzerland runs the boundary line of the Reformation, Zwingly, and Calvin with other Swiss having helped to establish it. Avoiding the linguistic boundaries it divides both the German cantons from each other as well as the French. Among the later Vaud, Geneva and Neuchatel are predominantly Protestan while Luzern, Zug, the two half cantons of Unterwalden and the canton of Solothurn are overhelmingly catholic. Many of the cantons are themselves evenly divided between two branches of Christendom. This is notably true of St. Gallen and Aargau. Somewhat less than two-thirds of the entire population is Protestant, somewhat more than a third is Catholic. In addition there are about 18,000 jews and some 50,000 who identify themselves with no religious confession.

Religious differences have in the past contributed their due share to internecine strife. For three centuries after the Reformation the Cantons fought amongst themselves on numerous occasions. (p. 982).

(From *History of Switzerland* by Oechsli)

On April 8, 1524 was concluded at Beckenried a union of 5 cantons, Lucerne, Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden, and Zug for the purpose of "punishing and eradicating so far as their means allowed Lutheran, Zwinglian, Hussite doctrine" and thus was constituted the first of those religious Sonderbunds of which henceforward Swiss history is so full. In all religious questions the five cantons henceforward acted as a united whole. The five cantons even entertained the idea of that the confederation ought to proceed against Zurich for breach of the federal alliance, if necessary by force of arms in order to bring it back to the catholic faith. In 1524 a religious war was on the verge of breaking out. The five cantons took the severest panel measures against the adherents of the new doctrine and Zurich, the Protestant being isolated had no power to protect its co-religionists. Whereas, at first they had been content with the expulsion of heretics, they began in 1525 to burn them "with fire to dust and ashes" and endeavoured to give their methods the force of law throughout the entire confederation. In 1525 the Diet held at Lucerne decreed severe punishment against the Lutheran Zwinglian heresy and against the printing and diffusion of Zwinglis writings and similar books. (p. 95-96).

The removal of images from churches by certain commune's governments by order of Zurich led to the wrath of the five cantons and the leaders were executed with swords. The wars of religious movement extended into the valleys of the Raetian Alps. The Grisons was in a condition of political ferment. The Kappel wars followed and it was the first great success of the reviving Catholicism. The issue of the Kappel war not merely from the Protestant point of view but also from that of nation was an irremediable misfortune since thereby was definitely established the splitting up of Switzerland into two hostile religious camps and the country was henceforward condemned for centuries to the suicidal employment of its energy against itself. (p. 128 Ibid).

At the end of the 16th century religious strife was the occasion for the partition of the canton of Appenzell into the two half cantons respectively the interior and the exterior Rhodes. Here for 60 years the two faiths had, thanks to religious freedom, been able to live side by side in peace. Now at the instigation of Numico, the Catholic majority in the capital of Appenzell determined that they would no longer tolerate any heretics, the Protestants were now either to become Catholics or to emigrate. In 1579 Appenzell was divided into Catholic and Protestant halves. (p. 178).

Linguistic differences have also caused trouble or at least aggravated difficulties arising from other causes. Nevertheless despite these religious and linguistic differences and the internal discord which they have sometimes occasioned, Swiss legal and moral unity has grown firmer with each passing generation.

(From Governments of Continental Europe, p. 983)

From 1848 onwards and at an accelerated rate since 1874, the confederation developed from a loose federation of states into a genuine centralised state existing beside and above the cantons and taking from them an even greater proportion of state duties heretoforce within their jurisdiction. Far from the sea, lacking coal, iron, and other raw material, Switzerland has nevertheless become an industrial and commercial country which takes rank with England, Belgium and Holland. The foreign trade of Switzerland which in 1885 consisted of imports amounting to 681,000,000 francs and exports amounting to 641,000,000 francs had in 1911 increased to 1,744,000,000 imports and the exports to 1253,000,000.

(From *History of Switzerland* by Oechsli)

To-day there is no people in Europe among whom a sense of national unity and of patriotic devotion is more firmly fixed than among the Swiss. In a world grown somewhat weary of the too frequent reiteration of the principle of political self-determination for races, religions and linguistic groups, the Swiss offer a splendid example of how statehood and national patriotism can be fostered in utter defiance of such a principle.

(From Governments of Continental Europe, p. 983).

The intellectual vigour of the Switzerland was manifested throughout the 19th century by the honourable share the country took in the literary movements in Germany, France, Switzerland at the same time in many respects pursuing her own path. The creations of the greatest Swiss poet Gottfried Keller of Zurich and the great writers as Albert Bitzuis, Conard Ferdinand Meyer breathe the ardent patriotism of the generation which created the federal state of 1848. (Oechsli, p. 417).

V. A LESSON FROM SUDETAN GERMANS

Poland

Although it is customary to regard Poland as a state of 34,50,00,000 people, its polish population numbers only about 2,30,00,000. The rest consists of national minorities which according to official statistics constitute between 30 per cent and 35 per cent of the population, unofficial observers believe that the per centage may be as high as 40 per cent. Poland has a larger minority population than any other country in Europe. The minorities control about 30 per cent of the votes. According to the religion test, 64·8 per cent of the people are Roman Catholic. The three most important nationalities in Poland are the Germans, the Ukranians and the Jews. The Germans are the minority which had a powerful national fatherland to which they may look for assistance. The Jews are widely scattered, 80 per cent of the Jewish population being found in the cities. In contrast Ukranians form a compact majority with a solid social structure in the rural sections of Eastern Galicia and the Eastern provinces. (From Poland: *Key to Europe* by Raymond Leslie Buell.)

The Example of the Sudetan Germans

(From *The Hindu Muslim Questions* by Beni Prasad)

Above all, there is a rough parallel between the Sudetan movement in Czechoslovakia and the advocacy of partition in India. The German minority which constituted 23·4 per cent of the Czechoslovak population and was concentrated mainly in the three provinces of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia, long agitated only for a large share in administration and policy. But in response to the pan-Germanism embodied in Nazi creed of neighbouring Germany, the Home Front, as the Sudetan German party led by Conard Henlein was called after 1933 and more definitely in 1935, began to think of frontier revision. The Czechoslovak authorities had certainly to answer for a few acts of omission and commission, specially in the years immediately following 1918; otherwise no state in Europe had a cleaner record in minority policy. But the Sudetans now accused it of oppressions and injustices without caring to prove the charges. Indeed, henceforward, an "atrocity" campaign became part of the technique of minority movements in Europe. The Sudetan party declined concessions made by the Czech Government and went on raising its demands. Speaking at Carlsbad on the 24th of April, 1938, Conard Henlein formulated eight points, inter alia, repudiating the very conception that there was a Czechoslovak State containing a German minority, demanding equality of status for the Sudetan Germans and the Czechs, a guarantee of this equality by recognition of the Sudetan Germans as a united legal personality, and full autonomy in every department of life of the German area of Czechoslovakia, including full liberty to proclaim

Germanism and adhesion to German ideology. On the 7th of June was submitted a Memorandum (not published until the 19th of July), demanding reorganization of the state into racial areas, virtual independence for each area and at the same time an equal voice in such central government as might remain. At last even the offer of home rule was declined and the Sudetanland, under overwhelming German, French and British support, seceded from Czechoslovakia and was incorporated into the German Reich in October 1938. The secession could not, however, form the last chapter in the story. It left the rest of the country defenceless Pan-Germanism is necessarily a brand of imperialism. In March 1939 it detached Slovakia from the dismembered state and annexed the rest of it.

Its Influence in India

The entire course of events was fully reported and closely observed in India, as elsewhere, because it brought Europe to the verge of war in September, 1938 and convinced all in March 1939 that a world war had become unavoidable. The progress of the Sudetan demands from a large share in administration and policy to a repudiation of minority status, the claim to separate nationhood, the denial of Czechoslovak unity, charges of atrocities and oppression unsupported by evidence, the demand for frontier revision, the advocacy of a virtual partition together with the claim of 50 per cent share in the residual central organisation all these features in the Sudetan movement in 1936-38 found their counterpart in the resolutions of the Muslim League in 1939-41. In fact, some of the phrases employed are identical.

VI

1. INDIA AND IRELAND

The startling resemblance between Ireland and India after the British settlement was observed by the Irish press on the announcement of the Mountbatten plan. The following extracts are from a daily paper:

Dublin, June 5.—The Irish press yesterday compared the British plan for India with the partition of Ireland, the newspapers alike disapproving of it on those grounds.

The Catholic Conservative Dublin newspaper "Irish Independent" declared: "The example of partitioning of Ireland should prove that partition is only a way of avoiding some immediate difficulties by creating more serious difficulties for future times."

The Belfast, "Irish News" wrote: "There is such startling resemblance between the new plan for India and the plan which partitioned Ireland that one wonders whether statesmen really mean it to succeed. If this proposal is Britain's parting gift, it proves that on the end as at the beginning she has learned nothing."

The Conservative Dublin "Irish Times" said that the situation in India today is 'strangely and ominously parallel with the situation in Ireland in 1920-22. Great Britain has reposed her faith once again in a compromise that may establish temporary peace, but contains seeds of trouble.

"Similar cleavage in Ireland, 25 years ago, resulted in a divided nation, whose material and spiritual weakness has become increasingly evident.

"It looks very much as if Great Britain will still be holding the Indian baby in 1980, less intimately perhaps, but not less firmly than she has been holding it up to 1947."

"Irish Press", the Government organ, commenting on the new Indian plan said:

"Ever since British withdrawal had been made certain by the courage of the Nationalist movement and sufferings of its leaders the Muslim League has demanded partition. In going, Britain will leave India weakened by dismemberment as she left Ireland. Governments may change, but imperial policy seems to go on for ever."

2. PARTITION AND ARABS

(By Abdul Qayum)

The Arabs, as a rule, are highly susceptible to the word "Partition". To the Palestinians it brings back grim memories of the repeated British attempts

at the division of Palestine between the Arabs and the Jews.

To the Iraqis it is a disconcerting reminder of the violent desire of the Kurds to establish a separate State. To the Syrians it recalls the almost forcible secession of Alexandretta by the Turks. Above all, to the Egyptians it tends to be a distracting element in their plans for the unity of the Nile Valley.

When, therefore, the British Government announced—almost with a flourish of trumpets—their decision to partition India, many an Arab shrugged his shoulders and smiled cynically at India's future. The consensus of Arab opinion would appear to be that the partition of India was neither a success for the Muslim League, nor a defeat for the Congress, but an unqualified victory for the British.

The Hindu Muslim problem initiated by the League on the basis of two nations' theory was observed by C. A. Macartney in "National States and National Minorities".

"The struggle resembles fairly closely that waged by the Magyars against the House of Habsburg ; and the support given to British rule by the Mahomedans of India recalls the alliance so often made between the Habsburgs and the Germans and Croats of Hungary. And just as the conflict between the Magyars and the "Nationalities" in Hungary did not reach its climax until the Habsburgs had practically abdicated their right to intervene in Hungary's internal affairs, so the presence of the English in India is postponing the true clash between the native races. As India acquires more real self-government, so that clash will come to resemble more closely sundry of the internal conflicts which have rent the states of Eastern Europe one may pray that those who read the history will have the wisdom to learn the lessons. One such lesson he has mentioned earlier in the book, which we in India will do well to bear in mind. When open conflict broke out between the Magyars and the Habsburgs, the Croats and almost all the other minorities sided with the Crown and the Magyars were overcome. Hungary came to be ruled from Vienna by a centralized and Germanizing bureaucracy giving satisfaction neither to the Magyar nor to the Slavonik ambition. This evoked from a witty Magyar the comment to a Croat friend that 'you have got as reward what we have got as punishment'."

[*India Divided* : Rajendra Prasad]

The following other extract also has a bearing in the situation in India.

"If we take the establishment of liberty for the realisation of duties to be the end of civil society, we must conclude that those states are substantially the most perfect which include various distinct nationalities without oppressing them. Those in which no mixture of races has occurred are imperfect ; and those in which its efforts have disappeared are decrepit. A state which is incompetent to satisfy different races condemns itself ; a state which labours to neutralise, to absorb, or to expel them, destroys its own vitality ; a state which does not include them is destitute of the chief basis of self-government."

[*India Divided* : Rajendra Prasad]

CHAPTER XLV

CONSOLIDATION OF THE INDIAN UNION

Sri G. C. Sondhi

THE very first essential of a Union is its political unification. A young State in its first formative stage, must give the highest priority to the task of political consolidation, social and economic stability and security against disruption and aggression. While in due course, the economic development of the country would be the strongest force for its security and safety, in the transitional stage short term measures might be necessary. Also all plans must be directed towards, and measured by the supreme test of unification of the country.



Mountbatten Plan

The Mountbatten Plan—and earlier Plans were worse in this respect had left the structure of our State with three major weaknesses. It severed parts of an economic and strategic unit and created a border State on the Western and Eastern frontier that was, bound, under the very circumstances of its birth, to be not very friendly to the Indian Union. Its hostility and ambition to expand would be natural and the slogans, like 'Has Ke lia hai Pakistan, lar ke lenge Hindustan' would reflect a natural sentiment. Secondly the Plan left in India a big minority, distributed all over the country, with inflamed sentiments and divided loyalty, a force of friction in times of peace and a fifth column in times of crisis. Thirdly, the Plan left the numerous States, comprising more than one fourth of the total Union area, as independent and sovereign. The British instead of leaving Sovereignty to the two Dominions took their stand on technical grounds that no doubt was a very thin camouflage of their real intention. The retreat in India was to be according to plan and the retention of India as a Dominion and of British economic and strategic position in India and these independent islands, in a balanced and ingenous structure had to be ensured.

It is no use today to go into British intentions or the merits of the Plan that we ultimately accepted.

Position with regards to the States

As it was, the situation with regard to the States, at the time of transfer of powers, was fraught with grave peril. It would have been natural for the rulers and their advisers to distrust the Congress, to give way to their personal ambitions and declare independence that the departing British had willed in their favour-like a miserly rich uncle who would not part with a pie in his life time. It is not yet fully realised what a triumph it has been for Indian diplomacy, foresight and patriotism that this danger was overcome in such a smooth and swift manner, almost completely. The credit, and the gratitude of the generations to come, must go, for this, foremost, to Sardar Patel's handling of the States problem at this crisis and earlier in the Congress policy with regard to States. Pakistan created complications with regard to Junagarh, Kashmir and Hyderabad

for the attitude of Hyderabad is only a furtherance of the Pakistan spirit and scheme. But, perhaps Pakistan also helped in making the States realise the danger quickly. Credit and gratitude must also go to the sense of patriotism, and realities, shown by the rulers and Dewans of the States, specially those who gave a lead.

That this smooth passage has been an uncalculated development for the British die-hards—who had given full support to Mountbatten Plan—would be evident from the amusing anxiety displayed by the Conservative members, in the Parliamentary debate about the States being coerced, one by one, into the Indian Union. The charge of coercion was however, refuted by the States themselves and no gratitude shown for British sympathy. While it must be said that Lord Mountbatten has been most helpful in rounding up the States into the Union, the attitude of the British press, and their representative in India, the Statesman over the question of Kashmir and Hyderabad is a pointer.

Kashmir links up the Indian territory with the U. S. S. R. It has also been looked upon as a potential homeland for a white colony. Hyderabad has been taken for granted to remain 'independent', a base, dumping ground and ulster in the very centre of the Union of India. Thus, when there was a danger of Hyderabad settlement being reached, the Statesman carried a frantic campaign, with a series of leaders and inspired articles, not only justifying independence of Hyderabad, but boosting the Ittehad-ul-Muslmin party for their attempts to prevent such settlement by force. Their leader had penetrating black eyes. Their followers comprised a determined, drilled and active youth. "Hyderabad is not Junagarh", we were told. "It is bigger, sturdier, better armed, better governed, economically more self-sufficient." That was not all. "Further it enjoys, unlike Junagarh international prestige having long been viewed throughout the Islamic world with respect as the premier Indian State, a semi-independent ancient monarchy, impressive survival of Mughal power, focus of modern Muslim culture."

The problem of Hyderabad has however been temporarily solved or put off and we have no doubt of its ultimate solution. Junagarh is also over. Kashmir problem now falls in a different category. The problem of States may be taken as successfully solved already. The danger that might arise from individual rulers cherishing suicidal dreams of asserting disruptive independence or of a combination of rulers as an opposition are now very remote. The Maharaja of Bikaner recently refuted such suspicion and denied that there was any intention of the Princes forming a separate bloc in the Dominion Parliament or the resurrection of the Princes' Chamber. In fact it is more likely that with the introduction of constitutional governments in the States—that can no longer be withheld—the States will have more and more common administrative concern with the Centre and more and more subjects, besides the original three on the basis of which they acceded would be commonly dealt with. The wooing henceforward is bound to be on the side of the States, for security and share in the schemes of prosperity and progress that our great country will soon see through.

In any case the protection of the Union from recalcitrant States and from forces of disorder that might threaten them and the Indian Union is safe in the hands of Sardar Patel. His policy with regard to the States has been friendly and firm. Recently during his visit to Rajkot Sardar Patel made a public pronouncement for the benefit of the States rulers and people.

Sardar Patel emphasized that, as one who had done more than anyone else to preserve the true rights of the Princes he felt that the Princes could survive only as trustees of the people. "Let them not heed false or fraudulent advice which interested persons engaged in pursuit of selfish ends might offer them. Instead let them carry the people with them. Princes and people belong to one family and their best and mutual interest lies in remaining as a family rather than behaving as foes. But at the same time it is the duty of the people to prove themselves worthy of the great responsibility which a democratic regime entails."

He recalled how Cochin had lately seen the farthest advance yet made on the road to responsible government but how, despite the full co-operation of the Ruler, the responsible government in the State had come to grief. But this was no weak kneed appeasement.

Referring to the fomentation of trouble in the States by Pakistan, he said:

"I assure you that we are not going to let the grass grow under our feet. Even if all these troubles come at the same time we have got resources which

would enable us to stand up to all of them at the same time. If they are anxious to challenge us, we would be ready to accept it.

"Let no State have evil designs on us or dream of extending its hegemony. Let them not entertain the fond hope of any Jatistan or Rajastan or Sikhistan. If they persist, all these dreamers will soon be disillusioned. Instead let them realize which way their true interest lies."

Sardar Patel's bill giving the Central Government powers and jurisdiction in the non-jurisdictional and semi-jurisdictional States and Taluks and the debate when this bill was passed on December 9, 1947 also gives an indication of the Sardar's clear recognition of the need of vigilence and firmness in this vital issue of our political existence. "Paramountcy", Sardar Patel said, "was dead and gone and nobody mourned or lamented it." There was no intention on the part of Government of India to encroach on the authority of any State and the bill was in the interests of some small States themselves for keeping peace. "The Government of India proposed to function as a Government and would not allow any vacuum or anarchy to develop in any part of the country." The bill had the support of the States representatives in the House, though there was a lively debate before it was passed.

Other Forces of Political Disruption

The 1935 Act, with 'Provincial Autonomy' and irresponsible Centre had a natural tendency to promote provincial rivalries and separatist development. This, however, was checked by the over-all control of the Congress Parliamentary Board, in which also the guiding hand was of Sardar Patel. There is always a danger in a big Union like ours of territorial zones developing on parallel lines, with increasing friction with the Centre and of indiscipline and revolt. The question of provincialism in India is more a cultural and economic than a political problem and may be dealt under that head. The danger of disruption in the country is from political parties, based on personal ambition to capture power by some leaders or a class of people and by a party that owes allegiance to some State outside the Union.

This brings us to the question of liberty for every body to work for such political ends as one thinks best. In the transitional stage, and in face of the actual situation, we must be prepared to curtail this liberty a good deal in our new State. Forces that are clearly disruptive must be checked if necessary by emergency legislation and strong executive action. It is natural for ambitious individuals and parties to try and fish in troubled waters. There has been a lot of drilling and recruitment of private armies and the A. I. C. C. had to pass a special resolution to check these. This applies to R. S. S. S., the various students groups being exploited by designing politicians, specially in West Bengal and the various 'Leftist' groups out to carve a kingdom. The recent happening in Calcutta in the name of demonstrations against the West Bengal Security Bill was only an index of what had been going on in Calcutta by the instigation of some leaders of Hindu Sabha, the Communist Party and the various 'Revolutionary', 'Socialist,' 'Marxian' mushroom growths. The Communist Party stands in a class by itself. For one thing their avowed object of promoting class war is fraught with danger in our economic and political conditions. For another their allegiance has been suspected to lie more with a foreign State than with the national State.

Problem of Muslim Minority in India

The most difficult problem left to India after its division is that of the Muslim minority that had been a supporter of the 'Two Nation' theory. But perhaps the Mountbatten Plan is superior to the earlier Plans in this respect, which would have impeded progress at every step. While we must aim at building a secular State for the satisfaction of Muslim as well as other minorities and for vital modern rationally-based progress, the problem is not only cultural but has a political aspect now. The loyalty and preference of an overwhelmingly large proportion of the Muslim supporters of the League for the foreign State of Pakistan cannot be easily dismissed. Incidents to emphasise this have been too recent and numerous and doubt has been expressed even by our most sober statesmen, like Sri Govind Ballabh Pant and others. The need for a clearly defined and firmly executed Government policy on this issue and the connected issue of our relations with Pakistan, was brought to the fore recently by Acharya Kripalani, the Congress President himself and in fact formed the major issue of difference on which he resigned from that exalted office. We cannot do better than

quote Acharya Kripalani in stating the position with regard to the connected issues of Pakistan and its residuary in India. The following is part of the speech delivered in the A.I.C.C. at Delhi.

KRIPALANI'S SPEECH

"Looking back over the ghastly tragedy of the last two months, I have no doubt that we would have been wise if, before agreeing to partition, we had made Mr. Jinnah face the logical consequences of his theory of two-nations.

We did not and do not believe in this pernicious theory and yet by accepting the June 3rd Plan we were more or less driven to adopt it as the basis of partition. However, my purpose in inviting your attention to this tragedy is not to discuss the past but to seek light for the future so that we may face it within one mind and with a clear conception of the issues at stakes.

Two-nation Theory

"Those of our Muslim countrymen, and they formed the overwhelming majority of the Muslim community, who, misguided by the League leadership, helped in the establishment of Pakistan assure us today that they no more believe in the two-nation theory. They are as vehement in their loyalty to the Indian Union as they were for the division of the country. Although we welcome these expressions of loyalty, it is only by their deeds that this loyalty can be tested. Nor is repentance in itself sufficient to wipe out the evil consequences of the mischief already perpetrated.

"The last few months' experience should teach us that it is easy to divide the country but not so easy to divide the peace of the country. In spite of the national and non-communal basis of our State we cannot ignore the fact that whatever is done in Pakistan has its inevitable repercussion in India. We should, therefore, frankly tell the League-minded Muslims that though we Congressmen and our Governments are determined to protect them, we cannot do so merely on the strength of our police and army. A democracy cannot put down the common man by sheer force of arms. The safety of the Muslims must come from their Hindu neighbours who form a majority of the population and from whom the majority in the ranks of the police and army must come. These will not be active in affording this protection unless they know that their coreligionists in Pakistan are getting a fair deal.

League Politics

"If that is so the Muslim community must organise itself to bring pressure on Pakistan to do justice to its minorities. It is the only way that it can show its loyalty to the Indian Union at this critical juncture. If the Muslim community fails in this effort it must be ready to help the Indian Union to adopt whatever pressure international practice prescribes to settle disputes between two independent States.

"It is no good shutting one's eyes to facts. We must face them boldly and keep it in minds as to what we must do if we wish to preserve the freedom we have won after years of suffering and sacrifice. The issue at stake is the very existence of our State. This time we realised that the politics of the Muslim League and the principles which govern its policy in Pakistan are the very negation of all that the Congress had stood for and one which we seek to build our own State in India. We believe in a secular, democratic State and, whatever the provocation and whatever measures we may be obliged to adopt to safeguard its security, we cannot think in terms of a communal State. The League, on the other hand, with its creed of Islamic exclusiveness, its cult of communal hatred and its practice of terrorism and treachery is an exact replica of the German Nazis. The more we appease its appetite the more it will devour till, like the Nazis in Europe, it will become a menace to the peace of Asia. If we do not take a firm stand today and prepare against this menace, we shall, like Chamberlain's England rule our folly.

"I do not suggest that we should declare war on Pakistan. Far from it. On the contrary, I hope and pray that such an unhappy contingency will never arise. But I do believe that the only way to avoid the ghastly tragedy of a war between India and Pakistan is to make India strong. There are many sanctions, economic and other, short of war, which we can use to help Pakistan see that friendly and amicable relations with India are to the mutual

advantage of both countries. Fear of the consequences of one's folly is a salutary factor in enforcing international, if not also individual morality.

"Our first and foremost duty to-day therefore is to sink all our petty inter-group or personal differences in one Herculean effort to build up a powerful state which will be a bulwark of peace. I am a believer in non-violence, but I understand the logic of violence. Our State, like every other State, maintains an army and must use it when occasion demands it. Weakness, I hold, is a crime. If we lack the supreme courage of non-violence and the will to follow the Gandhian way, let us at least have the common courage of disciplined violence. We have enough of resources and more than enough of man-power. All we need is organisation and drive to train and equip our men so that every city, every town, every village should have a disciplined citizen-army, which will be an instrument of service in peace and a guarantee of security in war. As far as I know the popular mind, the people are only too anxious to co-operate with the Government in such an organisation. I dare say the Government is aware of the urgency of the situation and is perhaps planning such a drive, but so far there has been little evidence of it, with the result that the people instead of being inspired with enthusiasm and confidence are daily becoming restive and critical and looking to communal organisations for a lead in this matter. After all in politics we must not only do the right thing but also appear to be doing so.

Nation's Strength

"The people must also realise that a nation's strength is to be measured not by the size of its armies but by the ability of the common citizen to rise to the occasion. The State can cope with external menace only if it can count on the disciplined loyalty of its people. No State can be strong where the people are prone at the slightest provocation to take the law into their hands. Whatever the provocations, the kind of lawlessness that recently disfigured the face of Delhi was the greatest disservice that our people could have done to the State. Apart from the moral degradation involved in lynching innocent men and women for crimes of their co-religionists elsewhere, such anarchy is the very negation of the conditions necessary for protecting our new-found freedom. If the people have a grievance they must look to the Government to take the necessary steps and if the Government of the day is not willing or able to do so, they can demand a change in the Government. But they have no right to deprive others of the elementary rights of citizenship for no other crime than that of belonging to a different religion. Even a criminal in a civilized State has a right to live, unless the State after a fair trial deprives him of it. It is degrading and barbaric of us to assume that a Muslim because he is a Muslim is unworthy to be a citizen of this State. All that we can demand is that those Muslims whose past record or present behaviour makes their loyalty to the State suspect should not be trusted with responsible positions in the services, in the interest of the safety of the State. But in no case can the people abrogate to themselves functions which properly belong to the Government. Thereby they will only weaken the State and wreck the very foundations of a stable and civilized existence.

Sources of Friction

"There are at present two sources of friction between India and Pakistan which unless eliminated or wisely controlled in time may develop into major conflicts or war. One relates to the problem of the minorities, the other to Kashmir, Hyderabad, and Junagadh. In relation to both these problems it is desirable that our leaders in the Government should take the A. I. C. C. into confidence and tell us what the present position is and what the Government's future stand is likely to be. On both these issues the nation is deeply agitated and Congressmen ought to know enough of the Government's policy to be able to explain and justify it to the people.

Minorities in Pakistan

"We cannot absolve ourselves of our responsibility towards the minorities in Pakistan. They were part of our nation as much as we are. They suffered and fought as our comrades in the struggle for freedom. They believed as fervently in the Congress ideal of a united India as we did. It is not they but we who voted for the acceptance of the June 3rd Plan which has deprived them of the fruits of freedom and placed them at the mercy of a party in whose ideals they did not believe. And yet as loyal Congressmen they accepted our decision in good faith, believing

that it was for the good of India as a whole. They believed in our assurance that their rights in Pakistan would be adequately safe-guarded. How then can we disown responsibility towards them today? How can we allow them to be treated as worse than Pariahs in Pakistan? How dare we deny to grudge them shelter when they come to us fleeing from terror worse than death? You have then to lay down a policy for all our provinces to follow. With intelligent planning and proper co-ordination we should be able to absorb in our economy a few million people. It may take time to do so, but the task should not be beyond our resources.

Transfer of Population

"What, however, is exasperating is not the nature of the task but the fact that in this, as in several other matters, we do not know where we stand. We seem to be living from hand to mouth and have left the initiative in the hands of Pakistan. We ought to have anticipated the contingency of a transfer of population being forced on us and should have provided for it in the June 3rd Agreement. As it is, we have been obliged to accept it with regard to the Punjab. Although Sind, Baluchistan and the Frontier are not included in the arrangement, we are faced with the fact of a daily exodus of Hindus from these provinces.

Bengal Situation

"Fortunately, the situation in Bengal is comparatively better but he would be a rash prophet who said that a similar contingency would not arise there. Are we going to let the initiative in this matter to rest with Pakistan so that whenever it suits its Government it hounds the minorities out of its land and forces us to maintain refugee camps in perpetuity? How long are the minorities in each Dominion to look for protection and shelter to the Government of the other Dominion?"

Sardar Patel, speaking at Rajkot had also expressed similar views on the situation of Muslim minority in India and the attitude of Pakistan, on November 12, 1947 three days earlier to the A.I.C.C. meeting where Kripalaniji had spoken.

Sardar Patel had a special word of advice for the Hindus and Muslims of Kathiawar. He recalled how in the past the Muslims of Kathiawar had contributed to the Muslim League propaganda of the two-nation theory and how they had taken part in League politics. "But I have forgotten the past, which is dead and gone, if only they will treat it as such.

"But, if they still feel an attachment to the two-nation theory and look to an outside Power, they have no place in Kathiawar. It was to put an end to this dual loyalty that we agreed to create Pakistan, so that those who prefer to abide in that faith can find a place where they can pursue it. In India there is no place for such persons.

"If they stay in India, it can only be as loyal citizens. Otherwise they have to be treated as foreigners with all the attendant disabilities. They should live in India like brothers and in harmony with non-Muslims."

Sardar Patel enjoined upon the Hindus to follow Mahatma Gandhi in his creed of non-violence. He recalled how recent disturbances had disgraced India in the eyes of the world. It was for them to win back their lost reputation by correct behaviour and noble conduct, he urged.

At the same time he deplored the tendency to get panicky. "If we have to die, we must die like brave men. As human beings with a sense of human dignity, we cannot die crying."

Sardar Patel asked Hindus and Muslims to forget the past and to live happily together. "To make it possible let Muslims in India search their conscience and ascertain if they are really loyal to this country. If they are not, let them go to the country which claims their allegiance."

Pakistan's Actions

Finally he felt he should make it clear to the audience that there was no question of India being unable to face up to the threats which had been held out. Pakistan's actions were probably prompted by the feeling that India was in trouble and, therefore, fomentation of trouble in the States would make matters worse.

"I bear Pakistan no ill will; I wish them godspeed. Let them only leave us to pursue our own salvation and stop meddling in our affairs even in places like far-off Tripura. We shall then each settle down to our respective destiny. Maybe after we have become prosperous they will awaken themselves to the need for reunion in the best interest of both. It is neither our business nor our intention to force a reunion. We only wish to be left alone so that both can live in peace and prosperity, happiness and harmony." He concluded.

The lead given to the Indian Muslims by Maulana in a recent Conference, if followed widely would no doubt go a long way in solving this situation. It is also to be noted that the Muslim League is being dissolved in India. But a more positive policy has to be followed by the Muslims in their own interests to strengthen the hands of those who want to see India a strong modern State and to bring pressure on their co-religionist in Pakistan for protection of the minorities there, before they can hope to dispel the atmosphere of suspicion against them.

Relations with Pakistan and India no doubt have become more and more strained almost to a breaking point, on account of the treatment of minorities in Pakistan, where a rule of utter lawlessness seems to prevail. Junagadh and then Kashmir has made the position very grave. In fact an undeclared war has been going on in Kashmir, between what are virtually Pakistan troops as invaders and the Union troops as defendents. But there is a hopeful aspect of the situation. The exchange of population has been going on for some time now smoothly and with mutual co-operation of the part of military and civil officials, immediately concerned. There has been a settlement without the need of arbitration recently on the partition of assets and liabilities, with complete unanimity. Both Governments have reaffirmed the principle that the ownership of the refugees property, both moveable and immoveable, continues to vest in the refugees and custodians have been appointed to look after these properties. A bitter cause of friction may thus be removed, perhaps. There are indication of a change in the attitude of the Pakistan Government that is full of promise.

The stand taken by Sheikh Abdullah the great leader of Kashmir and his party has been a great sobering factor in the atmosphere of communal distrust and hatred that League had engendered in our country.

Social Unification

While thus the consolidation and integrity of our State must be built up and preserved by negotiation, legislation and if necessary by force of arms, deep at the root of political cohesion must be the social and cultural unity of all people inhabiting within the boundaries of our Union. This work forms a long-term plan requiring patient building of the whole new life of our country. It only lays down a pattern in fact of the contents of Swaraj from the national angle, which should be the decisive angle. In India we have a heritage of essential unity that should provide us with the foundation of reconstruction. To build upon this we have further the experience and wisdom of succeeding centuries in the East and the West to draw upon. But there must be a central guidance and co-ordination in our policy with regard to all building, social as well as economic, conceived for the country as a unit. The provinces formed on a linguistic basis are in this way a hindrance to our unity. Language is a powerful cementing force, but an equally powerful barrier. Do we want our provinces to crystallise into special cultural groups and would not a mixed population living in one administrative unit work for more homogeneous Indian population? In fact, provincialism should be dissolved by special effort, by free domicile, by encouragement of inter-provincial marriages, facilities of travel and cultural exchange by enforcement of common national language, and common educational system and text books and promotion of more and more all-India institutions, services, and projects. There should be a conscious and organised effort to bring in more standardisation in, even things of outward appearance and way of life in the provinces and different communities, such as dress and modes, houses and furnishing, way of serving and eating food, customs of social intercourse between men and women. Such usage as works for segregation between communities, classes or creeds should be discouraged and even penalised. This can be done perhaps only by modernisation in outlook and modes as Ataturk Kemal did in Turkey. Or a simpler, healthier mode of new ways of life, more suited to our poor country, such as has been evolved by the Wardha school may be taken up as a model

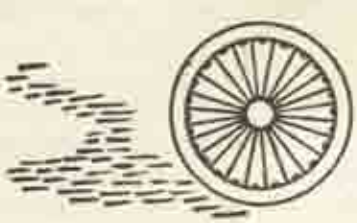
We shall have to have a policy towards religion in this context. While we must have a secular State by almost complete agreement, what are we going to do to the disphaid fissparous tendency that various creeds in India give rise to? This factor is so strong in our country that it cannot be ignored and all plans of social reconstruction have to take note of the negative and positive contribution of religious belief and usage in India. We should no longer have either the motives or the nervousness of a foreign Government to follow a policy of non-interference in anti-social and anti-national customs. The citadel of orthodoxy must be challanged and overcome in every religion. It is neither desirable, nor possible in India to abolish or even discourage religion. It must be overcome by a new universalism, religion based on morality and selfless service, of justice and unity.

The machinery for social re-building would be partially of the State, but the Congress can play a great part in it under the leadership of Gandhiji in whom we have our greatest unifying asset.

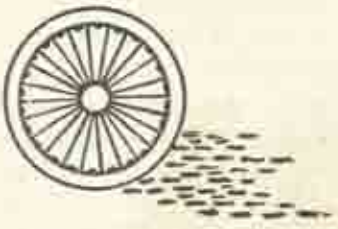
The greatest unifying factor, perhaps will be the material and social progress of our people depending on the great plans of our Government. People will forget to look towards the past and on petty dividing features in the vision of what lies ahead within their reach.

Our passage to freedom will be complete only with such realisation even in part. Then alone shall we enter the gates of liberty where we have arrived today and the bastion of our new State will stand impregnable by the united will of all our people.





INDIA'S CHARTER OF FREEDOM



THIS Constitutional Assembly declares its firm and solemn resolve to proclaim India as an Independent Sovereign Republic and to draw up for her future governance a Constitution;

WHEREIN the territories that now comprise British India, the territories that now form the Indian States, and such other parts of India as are outside British India and the States as well as such other territories as are willing to be constituted into the Independent Sovereign India, shall be a Union of them all; and

WHEREIN the said territories, whether with their present boundaries or with such others as may be determined by the Constituent Assembly and thereafter according to the Law of the Constitution, shall possess and retain the status of autonomous Units, together with residuary powers, and exercise all powers and functions of government and administration, save and except such powers and functions as are vested in or assigned to the Union, or as are inherent or implied in the Union or resulting therefrom; and

WHEREIN all power and authority of the Sovereign Independent India, its constituent parts and organs of government, are derived from the people; and

WHEREIN shall be guaranteed and secured to all the people of India justice, social, economic and political; equality of status, of opportunity, and before the law; freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship, vocation, association and action, subject to law and public morality; and

WHEREIN adequate safeguards shall be provided for minorities, backward and tribal areas, and depressed and other backward classes; and

WHEREBY shall be maintained the integrity of the territory of the Republic and its sovereign rights on land, sea and air according to justice and the law of civilised nations; and

THIS ancient land attain its rightful and honoured place in the world and make its full and willing contribution to the promotion of world peace and the welfare of mankind.

Speech delivered by P. Jawaharlal Nehru on the Objective Resolution

Sir, this is the fifth day of this first session of the Constituent Assembly. Thus far we have laboured on certain provisional and procedural matters which are essential. We have a clear field to work upon; we have to prepare the ground and we have been doing that these few days. We have still much to do. We have to pass our Rules of Procedure and



to appoint Committees and the like, before we can proceed to the real step, to the real work of this Constituent Assembly, that is, the high adventure of giving shape, in the printed and written word, to a Nation's dream and aspiration. But even now, at this stage, it is surely desirable that we should give some indication to ourselves, to those who look to this Assembly, to those millions in this country who are looking up to us and to the world at large, as to what we may do, what we seek to achieve, whither we are going. It is with this purpose that I have placed this Resolution before this House. It is a Resolution and yet, it is something much more than a resolution. It is a Declaration. It is a firm resolve. It is a pledge and an undertaking and it is for all of us, I hope, a dedication. And I wish this House, if I may say so respectfully, should consider the Resolution not in a spirit of narrow legal wording, but rather to look at the spirit behind the Resolution. Words are magic things often enough, but even the magic of words sometimes cannot convey the magic of the human spirit and of a Nation's passion. And so, I cannot say that this Resolution at all conveys the passion that lies in the hearts and the minds of the Indian people to-day. It seeks very feebly to tell the world of what we have thought or dreamt of so long, and what we now hope to achieve in the near future. It is in that spirit that I venture to place this Resolution before the House and it is in that spirit that I trust the House will receive it and ultimately pass it. And may I, Sir, also, with all respect, suggest to you and to the House that, when the time comes for the passing of this Resolution let it not be done in the formal way by the raising of hands, but much more solemnly, by all of us standing up and thus taking this pledge anew.

The House knows that there are many absentees here and many members who have a right to come here, have not come. We regret that fact because we should have liked to associate with ourselves as many people, as many representatives from the different parts of India and different groups as possible. We have undertaken a tremendous task and we seek the co-operation of all people in that task; because the future of India that we have envisaged is not confined to any group or section or province, but it comprises all the four hundred million people of India, and it is with deep regret that we find some benches empty and some colleagues, who might have been here, absent. I do feel, I do hope that they will come and that this House, in its future stages, will have the benefit of the co-operation of all. Meanwhile, there is a duty cast upon us and that is to bear the absentees in mind, to remember always that we are here not to function for one party or one group, but always to think of India as a whole and always to think of the welfare of the four hundred millions that comprise India. We are all now, in our respective spheres, partymen, belonging to this or that group and presumably we shall continue to act in our respective parties. Nevertheless, the time comes when we have to rise above party and think of the Nation, think sometimes of even the world at large of which our Nation is a great part. And when I think of the work of this Constituent Assembly,

it seems to me the time has come when we should, so far as we are capable of it, rise above our ordinary selves and party disputes and think of the great problem before us in the widest and most tolerant and most effective manner so that, whatever we may produce, should be worthy of India as a whole and should be such that the world should recognise that we have functioned, as we should have functioned, in this high adventure.

There is another person who is absent here and who must be in the minds of many of us today—the great leader of our people, the father of our Nation—who has been the architect of this Assembly and all that has gone before it and possibly of much that will follow. He is not here because, in pursuit of his ideals, he is ceaselessly working in a far corner of India. But I have no doubt that his spirit hovers over this place and blesses our undertaking.

As I stand here, Sir, I feel the weight of all manner of things crowding around me. We are at the end of an era and possibly very soon we shall embark upon a new age; and my mind goes back to the great past of India, to the 5,000 years of India's history, from the very dawn of that history which might be considered almost the dawn of human history, till today. All that past crowds around me and exhilarates me and, at the same time, somewhat oppresses me. Am I worthy of that past? When I think also of the future, the greater future I hope, standing on this sword's edge of the present between this mighty past and the mightier future, I tremble a little and feel overwhelmed by this mighty task. We have come here at a strange moment in India's history. I do not know but I do feel that there is some magic in this moment of transition from the old to the new, something of that magic which one sees when the night turns into day and even though the day may be a cloudy one, it is day after all, for when the clouds move away, we can see the sun later on. Because of all this I find a little difficulty in addressing this House and putting all my ideas before it and I feel also that in this long succession of thousands of years, I see the mighty figures that have come and gone and I see also the long succession of our comrades who have laboured for the freedom of India. And now we stand on the verge of this passing age, trying, labouring, to usher in the new. I am sure the House will feel the solemnity of this moment and will endeavour to treat this Resolution which it is my proud privilege to place before it in that solemn manner. I believe there are a large number of amendments coming before the House. I have not seen most of them. It is open to the House, to any member of this House, to move any amendment and it is for the House to accept it or reject it, but I would, with all respect, suggest that this is not a moment for us to be technical and legal about small matters when we have big things to face, big things to say and big things to do, and therefore I would hope that the House would consider this Resolution in this big manner and not lose itself in wordy quarrels and squabbles.

I think also of the various Constituent Assemblies that have gone before and of what took place at the making of the great American nation when the fathers of that nation met and fashioned out a constitution which has stood the test of so many years, more than a century and a half, and of the great nation which has resulted, which has been built up on the basis of that Constitution. My mind goes back to that mighty revolution which took place also over 150 years ago and to that Constituent Assembly that met in that gracious and lovely city of Paris which has fought so many battles for freedom, to the difficulties that that Constituent Assembly had and to how the King and other authorities came in its way, and still it continued. The House will remember that when these difficulties came and even the room for a meeting was denied to the then Constituent Assembly, they betook themselves to an open tennis court and met there and took the oath, which is called the Oath of the Tennis Court, that they continued meeting in spite of Kings, in spite of the others, and did not disperse till they had finished the task they had undertaken. Well, I trust that it is in that solemn spirit that we too are meeting here and that we, too, whether we meet in this chamber or other chambers, or in the fields or in the market-place, will go on meeting and continue our work till we have finished it.

Then my mind goes back to a more recent revolution which gave rise to a new type of State, the revolution that took place in Russia and out of which has arisen the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics, another mighty country which is playing a tremendous part in the world, not only a mighty country but for us in India, a neighbouring country.

So our mind goes back to these great examples and we seek to learn from their success and to avoid

their failures. Perhaps we may not be able to avoid failures because some measure of failure is inherent in human effort. Nevertheless, we shall advance, I am certain, in spite of obstructions and difficulties, and achieve and realise the dream that we have dreamt so long. In this Resolution which the House knows, has been drafted with exceeding care, we have tried to avoid saying too much or too little, it becomes just a pious resolution and nothing more. If you say too much, it encroaches on the functions of those who are going to draw up a constitution, that is, on the functions of this House. This Resolution is not a part of the constitution we are going to draw up, and it must not be looked at as such. This House has perfect freedom to draw up that Constitution and when others come into this House, they will have perfect freedom too to fashion that constitution. This Resolution therefore steers between these two extremes and lays down only certain fundamentals which I do believe, no group or party and hardly any individual in India can dispute. We say that it is our firm and solemn resolve to have an Independent Sovereign Republic. India is bound to be sovereign, it is bound to be independent and it is bound to be a republic. I will not go into the arguments about monarchy and the rest, but obviously we cannot produce monarchy in India out of nothing. It is not there. If it is to be an independent and sovereign State, we are not going to have an external monarchy and we cannot have a search for some local monarchies. It must inevitably be a republic. Now, some friends have raised the question: "Why have you not put in the word 'democratic' here?" Well, I told them that it is conceivable, of course, that a republic may not be democratic but the whole of our past is witness to this fact that we stand for democratic institutions. Obviously, we are aiming at democracy and nothing less than a democracy. What form of democracy, what shape it might take is another matter. The democracies of the present day, many of them in Europe and elsewhere, have played a great part in the world's progress. Yet it may be doubtful if those democracies may not have to change their shape somewhat before long if they have to remain completely democratic. We are not going just to copy, I hope, a certain democratic procedure or an institution of a so-called democratic country. We may improve upon it. In any event, whatever system of government we may establish here must fit in with the temper of our people and be acceptable to them. We stand for democracy. It will be for this House to determine what shape to give to that democracy, the fullest democracy, I hope. The House will notice that in this Resolution, although we have not used the word 'democratic' because we thought it is obvious that the word 'republic' contains that word and we did not want to use unnecessary words and redundant words, but we have done something much more than using the word. We have given the content of democracy in this Resolution and not only the content of democracy but the content, if I may say so, of economic democracy in this Resolution. Others might take objection to this Resolution on the ground that we have not said that it should be a Socialist State. Well, I stand for Socialism and, I hope, India will stand for Socialism and that India will go towards the constitution of a Socialist State and I do believe that the whole world will have to go that way. What form of Socialism again is another matter for your consideration. But the main thing is that in such a Resolution, if, in accordance with my own desire, I had put in that we want a Socialist State, we would have put in something which may be agreeable to many and may not be agreeable to some and we wanted this Resolution not to be controversial in regard to such matters. Therefore, we have laid down, not theoretical words and formulae, but rather the content of the thing we desire. This is important and I take it there can be no dispute about it. Some people have pointed out to me that our mentioning a republic may somewhat displease the Rulers of Indian States. It is possible that this may displease them. But I want to make it clear personally and the House knows, that I do not believe in the monarchial system anywhere, and that in the world today monarchy is a fast disappearing institution. Nevertheless, it is not a question of my personal belief in this matter. Our view in regard to these Indian States has been, for many years, first of all that the people of those States must share completely in the freedom to come. It is quite inconceivable to me that there should be different standards and degrees of freedom as between the people of the States and the people outside the States. In what manner the States will be parts of that Union, that is a matter for this House to consider with the representatives of the States. And I hope in all matters relating to the States, this House will deal with the real representatives of the States. We are perfectly willing, I take it, to deal in such matters as appertain to them, with the Rulers or their representatives also, but finally when we make a constitution for India, it must be through the representatives of the people

of the States as with the rest of India, who are present here. In any event, we may lay down or agree that the measure of freedom must be the same in the States as elsewhere. It is a possibility and personally I should like a measure of uniformity too in regard to the apparatus and machinery of Government. Nevertheless, this is a point to be considered in co-operation and in consultation with the States. I do not wish, and I imagine this Constituent Assembly will not like, to impose anything on the States against their will. If the people of a particular State desire to have a certain form of administration, even though it might be monarchical, it is open to them to have it. The House will remember that even in the British Commonwealth of Nations today, Eire is a Republic and yet in many ways it is a member of the British Commonwealth. So, it is a conceivable thing. What will happen, I do not know, because that is partly for this House and partly for others to decide. There is no incongruity or impossibility about a certain definite form of administration in the States, provided there is complete freedom and responsible Government there and the people really are in charge. If monarchical figureheads are approved by the people of the State, of a particular State, whether I like it or not, I certainly will not like to interfere. So I wish to make it clear that so far as this Resolution or Declaration is concerned, it does not interfere in any way with any future work that this Constituent Assembly may do, with any future negotiations that it may undertake. Only in one sense, if you like, it limits our work, if you call that a limitation, i.e., we adhere to certain fundamental propositions which are laid down in this Declaration. Those fundamental propositions, I submit, are not controversial in any real sense of the word. Nobody challenges them in India and nobody ought to challenge them and if anybody does challenge, well, we accept that challenge and we hold our position.

Well, Sir, we are going to make a constitution for India and it is obvious that what we are going to do in India, is going to have a powerful effect on the rest of the world, not only because a new free independent nation comes out into the arena of the world, but because of the very fact that India is such a country that by virtue, not only of her large size and population, but of her enormous resources and her ability to exploit those resources, she can immediately play an important and a vital part in world affairs. Even today, on the verge of freedom as we are today, India has begun to play an important part in world affairs. Therefore, it is right that the framers of our Constitution should always bear this larger international aspect in mind.

We approach the world in a friendly way. We want to make friends with all countries. We want to make friends, in spite of the long history of conflict in the past, with England also. The House knows that recently I paid a visit to England. I was reluctant to go for reasons which the House knows well. But I went because of a personal request from the Prime Minister of Great Britain. I went and I met with courtesy everywhere. And yet at this psychological moment in India's history when we wanted, when we hungered for messages of cheer, friendship and co-operation from all over the world, and more especially from England, because of the past contact and conflict between us, unfortunately, I came back without any message of cheer, but with a large measure of disappointment. I hope that the new difficulties that have arisen, as every one knows, because of the recent statements made by the British Cabinet and by others in authority there, will not come in our way and that we shall yet succeed in going ahead with the co-operation of all of us here and those who have not come. It has been a blow to me, and it has hurt me that just at the moment when we are going to stride ahead, obstructions were placed in our way, new limitations were mentioned which had not been mentioned previously and new methods of procedure were suggested. I do not wish to challenge the *bona fides* of any person, but I wish to say that whatever the legal aspect of the thing might be, there are moments when law is a very feeble reed to rely upon, when we have to deal with a nation which is full of the passion for freedom. Most of us here during the past many years, for a generation or more, have often taken part in the struggle for India's freedom. We have gone through the valley of the shadow. We are used to it and if necessity arises, we shall go through it again. Nevertheless, through all this long period, we have thought of the time when we shall have an opportunity, not merely to struggle, not merely to destroy, but to construct and create. And now, when it appeared that the time was coming for constructive effort in a free India to which we look forward with joy, fresh difficulties are placed in our way at such a moment. It shows that, whatever force might be behind all this, people who are able and clever and very intelli-

gent, somehow lack the imaginative daring which should accompany great offices. For, if you have to deal with any people, you have to understand them imaginatively; you should understand them emotionally; and of course, you have also to understand them intellectually. One of the unfortunate legacies of the past has been that there has been no imagination in the understanding of the Indian problem. People have often indulged in, or have presumed to give us advice, not realising that India, as she is constituted today, wants no one's advice and no one's imposition upon her. The only way to influence India is through friendship and co-operation and goodwill. Any attempt at imposition, the slightest trace of patronage, is resented and will be resented. We have tried, I think honestly, in the last few months in spite of the difficulties that have faced us, to create an atmosphere of co-operation. We shall continue that endeavour. But I do very much fear that that atmosphere will be impaired if there is not sufficient and adequate response from others. Nevertheless, because we are bent on great tasks, I hope and trust that we shall continue that endeavour and I do hope that, if we continue, we shall succeed. Where we have to deal with our own countrymen, we must continue that endeavour even though in our opinion some countrymen of ours take a wrong path. For, after all, we have to work together in this country and we have inevitably to co-operate, if not today, tomorrow or the day after. Therefore, we have to avoid in the present anything which might create a new difficulty in the creation of that future which we are working for. Therefore, so far as our own countrymen are concerned, we must try our utmost to gain their co-operation in the largest measure. But, co-operation cannot mean the giving up of the fundamental ideals on which we have stood and on which we should stand. It is not co-operation to surrender everything that has given meaning to our lives. Apart from that, as I said, we seek the co-operation of England even at this stage which is full of suspicion of each other. We feel that if that co-operation is denied, it will be injurious to India, certainly to some extent, probably more so to England, and, to some extent, to the world at large. We have just come out of the World War and people talk vaguely and rather widely of new wars to come. At such a moment this New India is taking birth—renascent, vital, fearless. Perhaps it is a suitable moment for this new birth to take place out of this turmoil in the world. But we have to be clear-eyed at this moment,—we, who have this heavy task of constitution-building. We have to think of this tremendous prospect of the present and the greater prospect of the future and not get lost in seeking small grains for this group or that. In this Constituent Assembly we are functioning on a world stage and the eyes of the world are upon us and the eyes of our entire past are upon us. Our past is witness to what we are doing here and though the future is still unborn, the future too somehow looks at us, I think, and so I would beg of this House to consider this Resolution in this mighty prospect of our past, of the turmoil of the present and of the great and unborn future that is going to take place soon.

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